



358

MUMUKSHU SAMAJAM

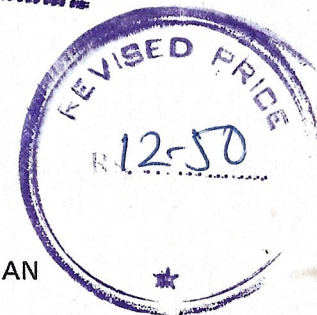
## The Age of Vidyaranya

PART ONE

HISTORICAL

*A. Subrahmanya Sastry*  
PHOTO & BOOK SELLER  
(AUTHORISED BY SRI SRINGERI MUTT)  
SRINGERI, KUDUR

Camp at..... Date.....



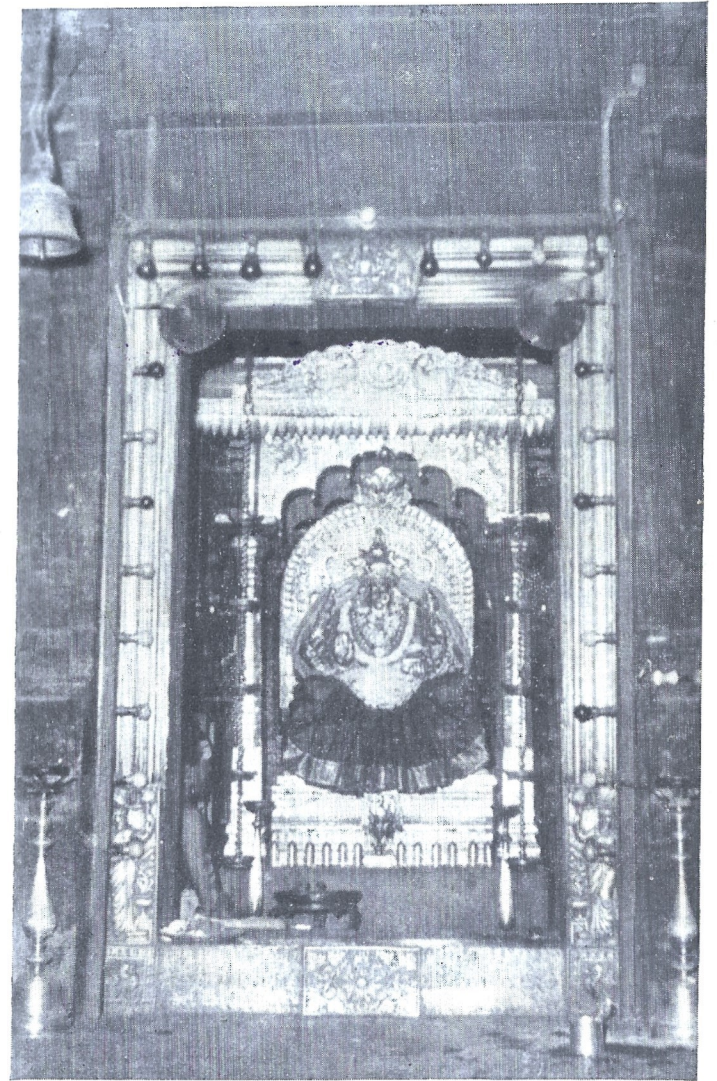
By

K. R. VENKATARAMAN



358

MUMUKSHU SAMAJAM



SRI SARADAMBAL TEMPLE

Coeval with the setting up of the monastic foundation in Sringeri is the temple of Sri Sarada, the presiding

P.T.O.



Goddess of the Peetha. The Moorti was originally made of Sandal wood and installed over a Sri Chakra carved on a rock by Sri Adi Samkara. Sri Bharati Thirtha and Sri Vidyaranya had a temple built similar in structure to other temples in Malnad. Sri Vidyaranya substituted the old Sandal wood Moorti with the present one in gold. Sri Sachidananda Bharati II instituted the Sri Sarada Navaratri festival which is celebrated now also with befitting dignity and beauty according to the illustrious traditions.



**His Holiness Sri Sri Abhinava Vidya Thirtha  
Maha Sannidhanam the Jagadguru, Sri Sankaracharya  
Dakshinamnaya Sri Sarada Peetam, Sringeri.**



श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः

## Publisher's Note

With pardonable pride, we place before the thinking mankind this book on "The Age of Vidyaranya" which combines three articles by Shri K. R. Venkataraman, Shri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer and Shri K. R. Srinivasan, each an authority in the respective fields on which they have written their thesis to make this book, authentic, authoritative and valuable. This has been possible only through the blessings of the Jagadguru, Sri Sankaracharya of Dakshinamnaya Sri Sarada Peetam, Sringeri, Sri Sri Abhinava Vidya Thirtha Mahaswamigal.

We want to express our boundless regret and tender our unconditional apologies for the delay in bringing out this book due to reasons beyond our control. During this period God in His Mercy snatched away from our midst two of the Authors, Shri K. R. Venkataraman and Shri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, both of whom were highly respected and learned scholars devoted to the Jagadguru of Sringeri Sri Sarada Peetam. To these two noble souls, we dedicate this publication and submit to the All-knowing our humble prayers that the departed scholars should live in the memory of our people for ever and ever in this publication. On bended knees, we make this apology to the departed scholars and prayers to the Almighty. The Co-author, Shri K. R. Srinivasan is fortunately with us and we feel confident that he will be preserved for many more years to enable us bring out reprints of this publication with his golden embellishments if and wherever required.

KALPA PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LTD.



**PUBLISHERS' NOTE**

**THE AGE OF VIDYARANYA**

**HISTORICAL  
CONTRIBUTION TO VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY  
ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE**

This invaluable book of three parts in one has the authoritative authorship of Shri K. R. Venkataraman, Shri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer and Shri K. R. Srinivasan, three stalwarts who have complete mastery of the subject each has dealt with. Each is a comprehensive thesis fully substantiated and written in a lucid style and brilliant analysis.

Adi Samkara Bhagawatpada incarnated in India to fulfil a glorious mission in the world in the eighth century A. D. and His contributions to the world of thought, philosophy and Bhakthi makes Him live in the hearts of millions of devotees, scholars, philosophers and thinkers all over the world. Making Sringeri His primary seat of identity and learning, Samkara Bhagawatpada moved round Bharatavarsha, establishing Peetas in the four corners of India, representing the four Vedas, the four Maha Vakyas. Five

**PRICE : Rs. 12.50**

Printed and Published by Mrs. Meena Subrahmaniam at Kalpa Printers and Publishers Private Ltd., P. 142, G. Block, New Alipore, Calcutta-53.



( ii )

centuries later, Saint Vidyanaraya adorned the same throne of transcendental wisdom, the Sri Sarada Peetah at Sringeri. This book deals with the unique contribution of Saint Vidyanaraya to spiritual and vedantic thought and sculptural and architectural renaissance. His works constitute the greatest treatises in post-Samkara Advaita literature and in these treatises He has brought to hear a synthetic spirit.

The three learned authors have given their treatises with meticulous care, their authorities have been clearly given and the entire treatise exemplifies their integrity in dealing with the subject with laudable objectivity and thoroughness and their profound scholarship.

Of the three worthy authors, Shri K. R. Venkataraman and Shri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer are most regretfully no longer in our midst. The Publishers regret that it was not possible to get this book out before they left this mortal world. It is a matter for gratification that the proofs were corrected by the two authors comparing same with their original manuscript. They live for ever for all people for generations in the pages of their writing. Shri K. R. Srinivasan, younger brother of Shri K. R. Venkataraman, is fortunately still with us. The book dedicated to the Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya, Dakshinamnaya Sri Sarada Peetam, Sringeri, Sri Sri Abhinava Vidya Thirtha Mahasannidhanam is presented respectfully to Shri K. R. Srinivasan with our profound respects to the memory of the two departed learned writers.

( iii )

The book giving the history of religious upsurge, philosophic thought and contemporary political, socio-economic, sculptural and architectural advance gives to discerning readers an authentic narration of facts and if reading it creates a desire, an eagerness to go into wider reading, the effort of the Authors and the Publishers will be amply rewarded.

KALPA PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS  
PRIVATE LTD.

CALCUTTA, 1976.



# The Age of Vidyaranya

## Contents

### PART ONE—Historical

By K. R. Venkataraman 1 to 34

### PART TWO—Contribution to Vedanta Philosophy

By M. K. Venkatarama Iyer 1 to 86

### PART THREE—Architecture and Sculpture

By K. R. Srinivasan 1 to 61



## ABBREVIATIONS

ARSIE : *Annual Reports on South Indian Epigraphy.*

EC : *Epigraphia Carnatica.*

FS : *Further Sources of Vijayangar History*—by K.A.N. Sastri and N. Venkataramanayya (1947).

GVK : *Guruvamsakavya*—a Historical poem—by Kasi Lakshmana Sastri (1735).

MAR : Mysore Archaeological Reports.

STR : *Sivatattvaratnakara*—(by Basava Nayak of the Keladi—Ikkeri dynasty 1709).

VKJ : *Vidyaranya Kalajnana*—(C 1500).

Kaditas are records inscribed on long pieces of cloth covered with a composition of charcoal and gum. The Sringeri Kaditas are in Kannada. (The other references are given in full in the text.)



## PART ONE

### Chapter I

One of the rare phenomena of far-reaching significance that occur in the religious history of India was the advent of Sri Vidya Samkara Tirtha (Vidya Tirtha for short). He was a *Brahmavit* (knower of *Brahman*), and to him came as it happens to all of his class, *siddhis* or mysterious spiritual powers. And these *siddhis* he fully utilised not for his personal gains for which he never aspired but for a great cause. Acharya Samkara Bhagavatpada incarnated in the world to fulfil a mission. A similar mission awaited fulfilment about five centuries later.

While yet in his early teens, Sri Vidya Tirtha was inducted into the *sanyas asrama* in 1238 by Sri Narasimha Tirtha, the ninth Acharya after Sri Sankara on the Sarada pitha in Sringeri, and in the succeeding year, became head of the pitha. From 1229 to 1333, Sri Vidya Tirtha reigned for a little more than a hundred years. There was nothing strange about this long period, considering his mastery over the *siddhis* that enabled him to prolong his life as long as he liked. Such a prolongation was, as would become clear later, a necessity to ensure the success of his spiritual mission.

The period witnessed the growth of important rival schools, those of the Virasaivas, and of the Vaishnavas ; one of the latter was associated with the name of



Sri Ramanuja and the other with that of Sri Ananda Tirtha, popularly known as Sri Madhva. Encouraged by royal patronage the Jains continued to influence a large section of the population. It was, therefore, incumbent on Sri Vidya Tirtha to undertake long and frequent tours in South India to preach the ideals of Advaita, to establish centres of learning and place them in charge of learned ascetics. As was usual in that period the Acharya held polemical discussions with scholars of other persuasions. One such debate was with Sri Ananda Tirtha (Madhva) in Trivandrum, which ended in the latter's discomfiture. These tours were undertaken in the first half of the Acharya's reign. He then established his hermitage in Simhagiri, where he spent many years in the company of numerous disciples, who by his grace, became adepts in mantra, tantra, yoga and meditation. There were others who also approached him for material blessings, or to pay their respects ; one of them was Ballala III (1291-1342) who came to the Acharya, shortly after his accession to the Hoysala throne.

It was not the emergence of the Saiva and Vaishnava schools, which were but divisions within the Hindu fold, or the growing influence of the Jain school which was but an off-shoot of the parent faith that really counted. The chaotic conditions that prevailed all over India at the time of Sri Sankara's advent appeared under another guise during this period. Starting as individual marauders, Muslim warriors, acting under instructions from the Delhi Sultanate, ravaged the land south of the Vindhya, toppled down the small and disunited Hindu kingdoms and posed a real danger

to the very survival of the Hindu faith. It was the Acharya's supreme mission to create the proper and adequate agency to start the process of stemming the over-increasing waves of Muslim aggression. The occasion demanded the services of a leader of unequalled spiritual eminence who, besides revivifying the Hindu faith, would help in the creation of a strong temporal power to protect and foster the religion of the people or, to express it in the Vedic phraseology, to harness the *Brahma* and *Kshatra* (spiritual and temporal) energies. Sri Vidya Tirtha discovered in his two famous disciples, Sri Bharati Tirtha and Sri Vidyananya, all the requisites of spiritual strength combined with talents of a high order. To Sri Vidyananya came two chieftains Harihara and Bukka, defeated in the battlefield and smarting under a sense of frustration. The sage undertook to help them not only to attain victory in the battle-field but to secure a throne. Acting under his advice, Harihara and Bukka went to Sringeri. Sri Vidya Tirtha received them, and accompanied them to the temple of Sri Sarada, where in the presence of the Mother of the Universe, he gave them his blessings.

The stage was now set for the safe-guarding of the Dharma through the establishment of a powerful Hindu State ; and the Acharya decided upon casting off his mortal coil. In Simhagiri, popularly called Hale Sringeri, where the Acharya had his hermitage, there is still preserved a stele which he caused to be made. He predicted that his entombed body, if left undisturbed for twelve years, would take a form symbolising the message that the stele was intended to convey.



The stele has four niches. In the eastern niche is a relief of Sri Vidya Tirtha himself flanked by his two disciples Sri Bharati Tirtha and Sri Vidyaranya; on the *prabhavali* is Lakshmi Narasimha with Sri Devi and Bhudevi and flanked by Surya and Chandra. In the southern niche is Brahma; the ten avatars of Vishnu are carved on the *prabhavali*. In the western niche is Vishnu as Para Vasudeva seated on Adisesha; the avatars are again represented on the *prabhavali*. In the northern niche is Sadasiva, with five faces; on the *prabhavali* are the dikpalakas. On top of all is a linga; this statue which is held in great veneration, is worshipped as Chaturmurti Vidyeshvara.

The Acharya explained to Sri Bharati Tirtha that his body buried alive would disintegrate and through soul power assume after twelve years a new form symbolising the inner message of the strange multiple image he had got made. A chamber was excavated on the northern bank of the Tunga, and in this underground tryst the Acharya sat in yoga. The chamber was closed over him. Three years elapsed. When the new Acharya was temporarily away from Sringeri the curiosity of the attendants got the better of their duty to their guru and they opened the chamber. The sage's body had completely disappeared and they saw only the form of a linga similar to the one on the top of the stele in Sringeri.

A word of explanation will not be out of place. By the practice of *Kecharimudra*—taking the tongue backwards beyond the uvula and stopping the respiratory process—the adept, seemingly dead to all external

perceptions, remains in this state as long as he wills. Charged with a new vitality or the soul force the body cells are capable of being transmuted into any form or to disappear altogether while the adept's range of superperception increases and he can exert his subtle influence upon the destiny of others. Hathayogis get into this state to prolong their bodily existence. But an *atmajnani* of the eminence of Sri Vidya Tirtha, while in this state, manifests for all times the power of Atmic realization and transmutes it to others through a symbol into which he by predetermination changes his body.<sup>1</sup>

This act of indiscretion completely upset Sri Bharati Tirtha, but he received a cheering message in his dream which directed him to instal the linga over the spot, round which a magnificent temple was built. Commencing in S.1260—A.D.1338<sup>2</sup>. This mystic temple is a symbol of integration—integration of all forms of worship,

1. In his two books, *A Search of Secret India* and *A Search of Secret Egypt*, Paul Brunton introduces his readers to adepts who lived for hundreds of years. Interment of a yogic adept while alive is called *Jiva samadhi*. Two prominent examples from South India are those of Sadasiva Brahmendra in Nerur (Tiruchirappalli district) and Patinattupillayar in Tiruvorriyur (Madras). Even today, after the lapse of centuries, devout worshippers who approach their tombs very often get a clear response to their prayers. In Sringeri, the conviction continues to prevail that Sri Vidya Tirtha still guides the pitha. Says Jagadguru Sachchidananda Siva Abhinava Narasimha Bharati, the thirty third Acharya: "I bow to the master Yogi Vidya Tirtha, who even today continues to be immersed in the state of Yoga."

अद्यापि योगनिरतं विद्यातीर्थं नमामि योगीशम् ॥

2. EC VI Sg. 5, 62, 14, 24 and 283. FS III. pp 12-13.



Saiva, Sakta, Vaishnava, Saura, Ganapatya and Kaumara ; integration of *upasana* (yoga) and *jnana* and integration of Isvara (with Form) with the Formless, and leading the worshipper's thoughts from the 'Relative' to the 'Absolute', gives concrete shape to the message of Master Samkara. The temple is an elaboration of the sermon sought to be taught in the *Caturmurti Vidyasvara* stele.

The Vidya Sankara temple became a centre of spiritual power and attracted gifts and endowments from kings and nobles and pious pilgrims, which are recorded in inscriptions ranging over several centuries and in several literary works. *Brahmavit brahmaiva bhavati ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मैव भवति* । is a bold declaration of the Upanishads. "Sri Vidya Tirtha was Mahesvara himself" declared a devoted posterity; and this belief found eloquent expression in the royal grants, and the panegyric introduction to them contained verses in adoration of Sri Vidya Samkara: "Whose very breath are the Vedas which sustain all the worlds, to that Vidyatirtha who is Mahesvara, I bow."

यस्य निःश्वसितं वेदाः यो वेदेभ्योऽखिलं जगत् ।

निर्ममेतमहं वन्दे विद्यातीर्थं महेश्वरम् ॥

Yet another verse says that "Sri Vidya Tirtha excels the sun, the latter dispels external darkness during the day, but the sage dispels the darkness (of ignorance) both within and without and both by day and night."

विद्यातीर्थयतीन्द्रोयमतिशेते दिवाकरम् ।

तमोहरतियत्पुंसामन्तर्बहिरहनिशम् ॥

And to this day the spiritual presence is so deeply felt that even the seal of the matha carry the name of Sri Vidya Sankara and not that of the presiding pontiff.<sup>3</sup>

The Acharya is said to have written *Sarvasaram*, a treatise on the essentials of the Vedas and Puranas to benefit the young, but no copy of the manuscript has been discovered in the math archives.

3. *Chronology* : A grant to Sri Vidya Tirtha by a Kadambaraya Chief was dated in C.A.D. 1230. The Acharya's polemical dialogue with Sri Madhva (1198-1275) took place in Trivandrum in the early decades of his pontificate. The visit of Ballala III must have occurred about 1292. The construction of the Vidya Samkara temple began in 1338, five years after the Acharya had entered the underground chamber (1333). All these data fit into the period 1229—1333 assigned to Sri Vidya Tirtha.



## Chapter II

The story of two Brahman *brahmachari* brothers from Warangal narrated in the *Guruvamsakavya* follows the account in the *Vidyaranyakalajnanam*. The younger, wandering in search of knowledge, approached Sri Vidya Samkara who, foreseeing great promise in him, gave him *sanyasa* with the name of Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha (Bharati Tirtha for short)—1328. The elder, roaming in search of his brother, at last reached Sringeri and begged to be ordained, which Sri Vidya Tirtha gladly did (1331). He was given the *diksha* name of Vidyaranya. Sri Bharati Tirtha, though young in age, became Sri Vidyaranya's senior. He was designated the senior Sripada and Sri Vidyaranya, the junior. Sri Bharati Tirtha remained in Sringeri and, after Sri Vidya Tirtha entered into Samadhi, became the presiding Acharya of the Pitha. Sri Vidyaranya went on a pilgrimage. In the depths of the Vindhyan forests he met a *Brahmaraksas*, Sringin<sup>4</sup> by name, who guided him to Varanasi. Sri Vyasa appeared to him in a vision, and directed him to go to Badari, where the great sage initiated him in the cult of *Sri Vidya*. Returning

4. G.V.K., STR, VRJ, etc. give an account of Sringin. A Brahmaraksas is the disembodied spirit of a Brahman versed in the Vedic lore, who out of extreme attachment, hovers about objects and persons, known to him while in his embodied state. Sringin has a shrine in Sringeri where, under the name of Malayala Brahman, he is propitiated occasionally.

to the south Sri Vidyaranya spent several days in meditation in the Matanga hill near the temple of Virupaksha at Hampi, where the two brothers Madhava and Sayana, sons of Mayana, of Anegunti, and formerly ministers of Prataparudra (1295-1336), sought his blessings. The sage, who had commenced the commentaries on the Vedas, gave them this work and some other works with his gracious permission to edit and complete them and propagate them under their names as *Madhaviya* and *Sayaniya*.

To digress : Devagiri, Warangal and other Hindu states in the Deccan fell before the advancing hosts of the Delhi Sultanate. Even Hoysala Ballala III accepted the position of a zimmi (feudatory). When Kampili fell, the two warriors, Harihara and Bukka, sons of Sangama, who had previously served under Prataparudra, and later taken service in Kampili, were captured and led as prisoners to Delhi where they were under compulsion to embrace Islam. Their valour was recognised and the Sultan sent them at the head of a cavalry to the Deccan to subjugate the rebellion that was brewing there. The Nayaks had freed the Andhra coast by 1331; then Tondaimandalam was freed, and Ballala joined the Hindu rebel movement. Harihara and Bukka also threw off the Delhi yoke, but met with defeat in an encounter with Ballala. Frustrated, they wandered in the jungles, and one day Revana Siddha appeared to Harihara in a dream and directed the brothers to seek the guidance of Sri Vidyaranya, which they lost no time in doing. This was the prelude to a career of glory both in war and peace. The next encounter with Ballala gave them victory which they followed up by recapturing Kampili and establishing a seat of government



at Anegunti. Again following the sage's counsel, they founded a city on a site on the right bank of the Tungabhadra opposite to Anegunti. The limits of the city were so demarcated as to be in the form of a Srichakra with the Virupaksha temple in the middle and provided with nine gates. The city was named Vidyanagara after the sage's name, but was popularly called Vijayanagara, 'the city of victory'. Its foundation is dated S. 1258 (April 18, 1336). A copper plate grant dated 1336 bearing the sign manual *Sri Virupaksha* says : "Harihara was seated on the throne as directed by Vidyaranya, the yeti in the temple of Virupaksha. Harihara made the sixteen great gifts, resplendent in the *nagara* (or city) called *Vidya* (or Vidyanagara) of vast dimensions - and he gave it the name of Vidyaranyapura. And for the worship of Lord Mahesvara of Sri Sailam he granted Chiravarapalli. By order of the king the *sasana* was engraved by the *sasanacharya*, Nagadeva." The emperor placed at his master's feet all his imperial insignia ; in return Vidyaranya bestowed on him the titles of *Srimad Rajadhiraja Paramesvara*, *Apratima Pratapavira* and *Narapatin*. Henceforth the Sringeri Jagadgurus came to be addressed as *Karnataka Simhasana stapanacharya* (the Establisher of the Karnataka throne.)

Sri Vidyaranya then resumed his pilgrimage to Varanasi, where he built two maths, one for himself and the other for his disciples.

In Sringeri, Sri Bharati Tirtha raised the mystic temple over the tomb into which Sri Vidya Tirtha had entered. Bukka, who was actively sharing with his brother Harihara the responsibilities of the State, sent contributions to the new temple through Madhava

mantrin. Harihara and Bukka, who had marched from victory to victory and extended their conquests from sea to sea, went to Sringeri in 1346 to celebrate their victories with the blessings of Sri Bharati Tirtha in the vicinity of the Vidya Samkara temple. All the brothers, their brothers-in-law and top ranking generals and administrators were present. Harihara commemorated the occasion by making a grant of land to the senior Sripada-Sri Bharati Tirtha. All these events, Bukka communicated to Sri Vidyaranya at Varanasi and forwarded a *srinukha* from the senior pontiff, Sri Bharati Tirtha, desiring his return. Sri Vidyaranya returned to Hampi, and from there accompanied by Bukka went to Sringeri. To mark the event Bukka granted an agra-hara as a homage to the two gurus. At Hampi Sri Vidyaranya had a math near the Virupaksha temple exclusively for his use.

In 1375, after leaving the pitha in charge of Sri Vidyaranya, Sri Bharati Tirtha attained *Videhamukti*. Two years later, in 1377, Bukka died and was succeeded by his son Harihara II. On the occasion of his coronation Harihara received the Acharya with all royal honours and laid at his feet various insignia including umbrellas, conch, disc, flywhisk, drums, bells, torches, banner and festoons of silk, palanquins, a golden throne and sandals inlaid with gems, all of which the latter dedicated to the sacred memory of Vidya Samkara. The Acharya initiated the emperor into the mysteries of Advaita meditation.<sup>5</sup>

5. "He obtained the sovereignty of spiritual knowledge, unattainable by other kings, through the grace-filled glances of the lord of saints, Vidyaranya."

(Continued on next Page)



In 1386, Vidyaranya attained *Videhamukti* at Hampi. Shortly after this event Harihara visited Sringeri and founded the agraharam of Vidyaranyapura in memory of his guru. The *vrittis* granted on the occasion included one each to the temples of *Bharati Ramanatha* raised over the samadhi of Sri Bharati Tirtha and *Vidyavisvesvara* built in Sringeri in memory of Sri Vidyaranya.

The literary and philosophical contributions of Sri Bharati Tirtha and Sri Vidyaranya are a class by themselves. *Adhikaranaratnamala* also called *Vaiyasikaratnamala* by Sri Bharati Tirtha is a metrical summary of the *adhikaranas* of the *Brahmasutra* giving the *purvapaksha* and the *siddhanta*. It has a commentary written by the author himself. This work is sometimes attributed to Sri Vidyaranya, but Appayya Dishita attributes it to Sri Bharati Tirtha. It is of considerable value to Advaita dialectics. *Panchadasi*, a standard treatise so called because of its division into fifteen chapters, is the joint work of both the Acharyas and so also is *Drgdrsy Viveka*. In the *Brihadaranyavartikasara* Sri Vidyaranya summarises Sri Suresvara's *varitika*. *Dipikas* on *Aitareya* and *Taittiriya upanishads* and on Sri Samkara's *Aparokshanubhuti*, and *Anubhutiprakasika*, a metrical summary of the twelve principal *upanishads* are also attributed

विद्यारण्यमुनीशस्य कृपापूर्णं निरीक्षणात् ।

योलब्धज्ञानसाम्राज्यं दुष्प्रापभितरैः नृपैः ।

Belagula C.P. S1306 (A.D. 1384)

Several nobles and feudatories, one of whom was Mallappa, Chief of Haladi, and numerous sanyasins and lay disciples received spiritual initiation from the Acharya.

to Sri Vidyaranya. The works of these two Jagadgurus are among the greatest treatises in post-Samkara literature, and it may be averred that between them what one wrote had the collaboration of the other, or the work reflected the ideas of both. Both the Acharyas occupy a unique place in the history of religions. With pardonable pride does the panegyrist claim that "Sri Vidyaranya's powers of exposition are more wonderful than those of Brahma; he can make (by his dialectics) the eloquent dumb and (by his instructions) the dumb very eloquent."<sup>6</sup> Sri Bharati Tirtha refuted the doctrines of Bhatta (Kumarila), Buddha, Jina, Guru (Prabhakara), the logicians and the Carvakas and established the supremacy of Advaita.<sup>7</sup> "His impressive and dignified discourses resemble the uninterrupted flow of Ganga from the Himalayan slopes."<sup>8</sup> And they owed all this eminence to the blessings of Sri Vidya Samkara.

6. वाचालं कुस्ते मूकं मूकं वाचालं पुङ्गवम् ।

विद्यारण्य गुरोस्त्रिचरितं चतुराननात् ॥

7. भाट्टं संघट्टयन्तं कटुरटनं पटुं तार्किकं मूर्खयन्तं

बौद्धानुद्धावयन्तं क्षपणकं फणितिं तूर्णमाचूरयन्तम् ।

उद्धण्डं खण्डयन्तं समितिं गुरुमतं तत्त्वमद्वैतयन्तं

चार्वकं खर्वयन्तं भजत यतिपतिं भारती तीर्थसंज्ञम् ॥

8. यस्तुव्याख्यानं काले रचयति हिमन्तसानु निभदभिन्न-

स्फूर्जद्गंगाप्रवाहानुकरणममलो भारती तीर्थ एषः ॥

( From the introductory verses in the imperial grants )



### Chapter III

Mayana and Srimati had three sons, Madhava, Sayana and Bhoganatha. They belonged to the Bharadvaja gotra, Bodhayana sutra. Madhava and Sayana had the blessings of Sri Vidyanaya and received from him his sketches of *Vedbahashya* and some other works. Directed by the sage, they took service in the Vijayanagar Court and served as Ministers under Harihara I and Bukka. Sayana continued as Minister to Harihara II also, until his death in 1387.

The works clearly attributable to Madhava are *Parasasmriti vyakhyā* which included an independent treatise *Vyavaharika Madhaviya*, *Kalamadhaviya*, *Jivamuktiviveka* and *Jaiminiyanyayamala* and its *vistara*. In these works Madhava mentions his parents, brothers and gurus-Vidya Tirtha and Bharati Tirtha. He describes himself as an *ornament of the sastra of Mimamsa of three kandas* and *pratīvasanta somayajin* (one who performs the soma sacrifice during spring of every year). His *Dhatuvritti* is a commentary on the *Dhatupatha* of Panini.

Sayana's *magnum opus* was certainly the *Veda bhashyas*. Among his other works are *Subhashitasudhanidhi*, *Alamkara Sudhanidhi*, *Prayaschitta Sudhanidhi*, *Purushartha Sudhanidhi* and *Yajñatantra Sudhanidhi*. The writing of these works which cover such different

fields as anthology, poetics and rhetoric in literature, ritualistic codes, and moral codes, was spread over the reigns of Bukka I and Harihara II comprising the second half of the fourteenth century. In one of these works he describes his brother as one enjoying various pleasures अनन्त भोग संसत्, and in another as the *performer of great sacrifices*.

The works of these two brothers including those of Bhoganatha, some of which were written late in the fourteenth century, clearly indicate that Madhava was a *grahasta* and continued to be such till his death in the second half of the fourteenth century. No inscription either of the fourteenth or of the subsequent centuries shows the identity of Madhava with Vidyanaya.

Bigotry dies hard; particularly one having a religious bias. A blind belief set in that Madhava took sanyasa and became Vidyanaya, and what was worse, any writing of any person called Madhava, no matter when it was written, was foisted upon the name of Sri Vidyanaya. It is glibly assumed that Madhava entered the *sanyasa ashrama* about 1370 or later before the death of Sri Bharati Tirtha in 1375. This facile assumption overlooks all important literary accounts and epigraphic evidence, that from the day Harihara and Bukka first met Sri Vidyanaya about 1334-5, they, and after them Harihara II, knew Sri Vidyanaya as a *sanyasin* and never as a *grahasta*. The accounts of Nuniz, Ferishta and Buchanan also bear out that Harihara and Bukka came under the influence of an *anchorite* and not a *householder*. The *Guruvamsakavya*, *Sivatatvaratnakara*, *Vidyanayakalajñanam* and other works



written during the time of the Keladi Nayaks, in whose territories Sringeri was included, aver that Sri Vidyaranya was a sanyasin when he accepted the homage of Harihara and Bukka and helped them to found a kingdom. सुयहान् भिक्षुः । —'the puissant sanyasi' is how the *Sivatatvaratnakara* describes him in this particular context of his meeting Harihara and Bukka. It is clear that from 1331, till his death in 1386, Sri Vidyaranya was throughout a sanyasin and never married. Madhava, on the other hand, is described as a Minister and *kula-guru* (family priest), an office which no contemporary Vijayanagar emperor would have thought of assigning to Sri Vidyaranya, whom they extolled as the *effulgent sun*, or *an incarnation of the Supreme Effulgence* higher than the *Gods of the Trinity*, and at whose feet they laid imperial insignia. And Harihara II got from the Acharya initiation into the *Atmavidya*. A mere family priest, that Madhava was, could count on nothing better than perquisites. Thus there is the vivid picture of a great spiritual guru to whose very sandals worship was offered as contrasted with that of a family priest who was counted as a member of the royal establishment. In the introductory passages, Sayana says that Bukka *commanded* (अन्वशात् or आदिशत्) Madhava to write the *Veda bhashya* and when the latter suggested that his brother might be given the task, the emperor directed Sayana to write it. A similar account is found in the *Purusharthasudhanidhi* and other works of Sayana. Ahobila Pandita, a nephew of Madhava, traces the genesis of these works. The 'guru of all (अखिलगुरु - not a mere family priest), the bestower of imperial dignity on Harihara' etc., Sri Vidyaranya was

the originator of the *Veda bhashyas* and of *Dhatuvritti*. Sri Vidyaranya initiated the scheme and Sayana completed it. At the end of each *adhyaya*, *anuvaka* and *khanda*, the *Veda bhashyas* carry the explicit statement that Sayana wrote them. The Colophon says : इतिसायणाचार्यविरचिते माधवीये वेदार्थप्रकाशे..... and the introductory verse in *Dhatuvritti* runs :

तेन मायण पुत्रेण सायणेन मनीषिणा ।

आख्यया माधवीयेयं धातु वृत्ति विरच्यते ॥

The inspirer and planner of these works was Sri Vidyaranya, the compiler Sayana and a collaborator Madhava. The formula *Madhaviya* marks a dedication to a respected elder brother and a grateful acknowledgement of collaboration.

Mayana's youngest son Bhoganatha served as companion and counsellor to Prince Sangama. He was legitimately proud of his brothers and said that while Madhava was *manas* (the perceptive mind), Sayana was *buddhi* (the discriminating mind). (मनोबुद्धिसहोदरौ) He wrote the *Udaharanamala* and some other works.

Sayana had two sons ; one of them was Madhava or Mayana who wrote the *Sarvadarsanasangraha*. He quotes Vedantacharya or Vedanta Desika and Jayatirtha. His guru was Sarvajna Vishnu, son of Sarangapani.



#### Chapter IV

Born in Tiruvidaimarudur (Madhyarjunam) on the banks of the Kaveri, to Vanchesa and Venkatasubbamma, and ordained into *sanyasa* by Anandatma Sarasvati, Samkarananda repaired to Sringeri and sat at the feet of Sri Vidya Tirtha. He was held in high respect by Sri Vidyaranya with whom he co-operated in founding several small maths. He wrote a *dipika* on the *Brahma-sutra*, a glossary on the *Bhagavad Gita* called *Gita-tatparayabodhini* and *vrittis* on twenty-seven Upanishads, and *Atmapurana* or *Upanishadratna*—a work in *anushtup* verse giving the purport of the Upanishads. This native of Madhyarjuna spent several years of retreat in Mallikarjuna (Srisailam) and Ahobilam.

Originally immigrants from Kashmir, a distinctive sect of Saivas had the appellation *Kriyasakti*, different from the Lakulisa-Pasupata-Mahavratins, who had the appellation *Rasi*, and the Lakshadhyayis of the Mattamayura clan who added the appellation of *Siva* or *Sambhu*. Inscriptions mention a Kriyasakti in the reign of Ballala II (1189). Kasivilasa Kriyasakti was a contemporary of Bukka. A disciple of Sri Vidyaranya, a Vedic scholar and 'promoter of the path of the Upanishads', Kriyasakti gave to the world the *Sarvagamasara samgraha* which, while teaching the essence of the Vedas, Puranas and Samhitas, extolled Siva as the Supreme Absolute. This was composed at the request

of his favourite disciple Madhava mantrin who describes himself as 'a bee at the lotus feet of Tryambaka' and pupil of the teachers Kriyasakti and Vidyaranya. Kasivilasa Kriyasakti was also one of the Raja gurus of Bukka I and Harihara II.

Before he died in 1388, he took sanyasa with the diksha name of Vidyasamkara, after his illustrious paramaguru (guru's guru). In 1389 Immadi Bukka Raya (later Bukka II), son of Harihara II, renamed a village as Vidyasamkarapuram, in honour of this guru, and gave it as a gift for the worship of the linga installed over the grave of this Raja guru. Other endowments were later made to this shrine of Vidyasamkara (Kriyasakti) by Madhavamantrin's sons and other nobles and chiefs. His successor was Vanivilasa Kriyasakti.

Kasivilasa Kriyasakti's disciple, Vasanta Madhavamantrin, popularly called Madarasa Udayar, was a son of Chavunda and Machchambika of the Angirasa gotra. He held office as a Minister of Bukka I and later of Harihara II. Bukka frequently deputed him to Sringeri to submit the imperial grants in person to Sri Bharati Tirtha. He was a remarkably able general and first served under Marappa, a brother of Harihara I, and later during the reign of Harihara II, conquered Goa, Chaul and Dhabol from the Muslims when Mohammad II (1378-97) was Bahmini king. He is described in the records as 'the vanquisher of the Turushkas'. He was made governor of Banavase 12,000, Goa, Barakura and other territories on the west coast. An erudite Vedic scholar, he wrote the *Tatparyadipika* which is a commentary on *Suta Samhita*. The Colophon mentions him



as 'Madhavacharya, an ardent *bhakta* of Kasivilasa Kriyasakti, one interested in the service of the lotus feet of Lord Tryambaka (Siva) and the promulgator of the Upanishadic lore'.<sup>9</sup>

*Madhaviya Samkara digvijaya* is a very popular poem on the life of Sri Samkara. It is generally believed that the book was written by Madhava, son of Mayana and brother of Sayana, and people who ignorantly believe in the identity of Madhava with Sri Vidyaranya, call it *Vidyaranya Samkara digvijaya*. The author describes himself with pride as *Abhinava Kalidasa* (modern Kalidasa). It is incomprehensible how one like Sri Vidyaranya steeped in Atmic realization, would ever describe himself as *Abhinava Kalidasa*. If at all there was a description, it would be something like *Abhinava Vyasa*, *Abhinava Sukha* or *Abhinava Samkara*. The author in a reminiscent mood regrets having sullied his 'speech' ( *गिरा* ) by praising men of rank and wealth but of mediocre merit, and hopes he will purify it by speaking about Samkara's greatness.<sup>10</sup> Such a sentiment can never be associated with Sri Vidyaranya. Sages bless but do not flatter. Again there is absolutely no reference in any of the works of Madhava, the eldest son of Mayana, or of his brothers Sayana and Bhoganatha, or of his contemporaries, or any epigraphical record to show that he called himself *Abhinava Kalidasa* and wrote the *Samkara digvijaya*. This Madhava, son of Mayana, was too engrossed with the study and exposition of Jaiminiya Mimamsa, and in the periodical performance of sacrificial rituals,

to be interested in the study of any other branch of knowledge. A few points by way of internal evidence may be considered. The author pays homage to Vidya Sankara, and there is a reference to the Turushkas Madhava mantrin, son of Chavunda, was fully aware of the depredations caused by the Turushkas whom he routed in battle. And Vidya Sankara is the diksha name assumed by his guru Kasivilasa Kriyasakti. Sarga 12 carries an intimate and detailed description of the regions near the west coast from Gokarna to Sringeri, and the scenic description of the villages appears to be realistic pen pictures of the land. This evidences the poet's intimate acquaintance with the region. Madhava mantrin served in this region practically throughout his life, first as Minister to a royal prince administering it, and later himself as administrator. Verses 27 to 37 that constitute a prayer to Goddess Mukambika of Kollur read like a page from a Sakta Tantra of the Kashmir school. Verse 33 mentions *Pratyabhijna mata*, a term which signifies the Kashmir school of Saivism. Madhavamantrin derived his knowledge of this particular lore from his guru Kasivilasa Kriyasakti who was an adept and whose predecessors had migrated from Kashmir. It may, therefore, be said with an amount of plausibility that Madhava mantrin wrote the *Vijaya*. Though it is not seldom that conclusions are arrived at and recorded with more meagre evidence than are available here, the present conclusion may be considered tentative, awaiting further consideration. This work has gained popularity vis-a-vis the other biographies of Samkara because of its freedom from partisan bias and prejudices. It has an epic flow, though didactic in several places. To real poetic merit has been

9. MAR 1929, No. 90

10. I Vv 7 and 8.



added acquaintance with contemporary polemics in philosophy and clarity in the exposition of the conclusions of Advaita.

The galaxy of contemporary writers on Advaita includes Amalananda, the author of *Kalpataru*, who through his preceptor Sukhaprakasa belongs to the *sishya parampara* of Sri Janaottama, Pratyagrupa Bhagavan, who commented on *Chitsukhi*, Brahmananda Bharati, commentator on the *Vakysuddhe*, who adores Sri Bharati Tirtha and Vidyaranya, Ramakrishna Pandita, commentator on the *Panchadasa*, Krishnananda Bharati, a disciple of Sri Bharati Tirtha and author of *Mahavakyartha darapana*, Anandapurna Vidyasagara, Akhandananda, Anandasvarupa, disciple of Anandatman, and Anandagiri.

---

## Chapter V

Spiritual aspirants not capable of attaining the goal through *vichara* (cogitation), discrimination and meditation need a practical method of *sadhanas* or spiritual practices—which the *Agamas* provide. In the *sadhanas* are integrated *karma* in the form of ritualistic practices, *bhakti* and *yoga*, all helping to reach the final goal of the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self. The fusion of Agamic (Tantrika) sadhana with the Advaitic goal that had been superbly worked out by Sri Gaudapada and Sri Sankara, received a fillip from Sri Bharati Tirtha and Sri Vidyaranya. The Vidya Sankara temple is a magnificent plastic representation of the mystic truth of the fusion of Agama with the Upanishadic ideal. Contemporary and later Agamic works of the three schools, Saiva, Sakta and Vaishnava, include in their *guruparampara*, the names of Sri Gaudapada, Sri Samkara and Sri Vidyaranya. In the age of Vidyaranya there were other adepts in the Agamas. One of them was Kasivilasa Kriyasakti. He wrote the *Saiva-agamasara*. Another was Srikanthanatha, a disciple of Paramatma Tirtha. He was one of the preceptors of the three brothers, Madhava, Sayana and Bhoganatha. This Srikantha is not to be confused with Srikantha who wrote the *Brahma-sutra-mimamsa-bhashya*, from the Saiva point of view, and was the *rajaguru* of Vikrama Chola. Nilakantha, who belonged to the age of Vidyaranya, wrote the *Kriyasara*, a metrical compendium of Srikantha's



*bhashya* which discovers common grounds between his system and that of the Virasaivas. Brahmananda Sarasvati, a pupil of Ramanuja Sarasvati, is the author of *Purusharthaprabodha*, a treatise on Saivism extolling the virtues of *bhasma*, and *rudrakshadharana* and Rudra worship. *Gadyavallari*, a manuscript of considerable interest from Sitamarhi in North Bihar, is a treatise on *Sri Vidya* dealing with *japa* and other *sadhanas* of Devi worship. It enumerates the *Guruparampara* of this particular *sampradaya* (tradition). Beginning with Siva, the gurus are mentioned in the following order—Vishnu, Brahma, Vasishtha, Sakti, Parasara, Vyasa, Sukha, Gaudapada, Govinda, Samkara, Visvarupa, Bodhaghana, Jnaneghana, Jnanottama Siva, Jnanagiri, Simhagiri, Isvara Tirtha, Nrisimha Tirtha, Vidya Tirtha Siva, Bharati Tirtha and Vidyaranya. So far the lineage is identical with the succession of the gurus of the Sringeri Sarada Pitha. Then is mentioned Malayananda Deva Tirtha Sarasvati, who was initiated into *Sri Vidya* by Sri Vidyaranya. Then follows a line of sishyas from Malayananda Deva Tirtha Sarasvati. Sri Vidyaranya is reputed to have compiled a *kalpa* or ritualistic code for *Sri Vidya Sadhakas*, parts of which are in the possession of some sadhakas, but the complete authentic work is yet to be collected and published. The rituals of Vishnu worship compiled by Sri Vidyaranya are in vogue in some of the branch maths, where Vishnu is worshipped in one or other of His forms. In Sringeri Sarada pitha prominence is given to the *upasana* including ritualistic worship of Lakshmi Narasimha.

A notable feature of the age is the development of other schools of philosophy, made possible in

Peninsular India by the religious revival brought about by the efforts of Sri Vidyaranya, channelled through the establishment of a Hindu Central state in Vijayanagar. The Vaishnava schools put forth eminent thinkers. Sri Vedantacharya, popularly known as Vedanta Desika or Svami Desika (1268-1369), a much junior contemporary of Sri Vidyaranya, was perhaps the most eminent. His learning and piety won for him the regard even of rival schools. The story that he met Sri Vidyaranya is apocryphal. It is very doubtful if ever he visited Vijayanagar. While Sri Vedanta Desika was a leader of the Vadakalai sect, Sri Manavalamamuni, another remarkable teacher (born 1370), was the leader of the Tungalai sect. Sri Madhvacharya's successor Sri Akshabhya Tirtha, and the latter's successor Sri Jaya Tirtha, both belonging to this period, were able scholars. Sri Jaya Tirtha, known as Tikacharya, was particularly honoured by Sri Vidyaranya and, at the latter's instance, by the emperor. The Siddhanta school of Saivism found a congenial soil in the Tamil Nadu and established prominent mathas. Meykandar's *Sivajnanabodam* (13th century) and following it, Arunandi's *Sivajnana Sittiyar* are the classic authorities of this school of Philosophy. Among teachers of Advaita in Tamil were Svarupananda Desika and his pupil Tattuvarayar; the latter's devotional poems and songs in Tamil have a perennial appeal.

The Jains also contributed to this complex of culture. It is to be noted that in Sringeri town there is a Jain temple founded in the 12th century and fostered by the Sringeri math. There is in Sringeri a colony of Muslims, descendants of those sent by the emperors to serve as guards and keepers of the math-



insignia. They have a mosque which is also fostered by the math. The leaders of the rival schools often met to hold dialogues and used all their weapons of polemics to uphold their philosophy, but maintained a commendable social unanimity and a common approach in all matters relating to the well-being of the Hindu community. Occasional disputes arose, but they were settled through mutual adjustments. There is a record relating to a dispute between the Jains and Vaishnavas, which was inquired into by Bukka. He summoned the leaders of both the schools from their reputed centres and helped them to settle all the matters in dispute. Placing the hands of the Jains on those of the Vaishnavas he proclaimed that they were like his two eyes.<sup>11</sup> Such was the hold of Sri Vidyaranya's influence on the emperor that he looked upon all creeds and sects with equal respect and fostered them.

---

11. EC IX Int.—Ma 18.

## Chapter VI

Active steps were taken to popularise the Veda bhashyas. Sayana himself toured round the country for the purpose. A record<sup>12</sup> in the Arulala (Varadaraja) Perumal koil at Kanchi is in praise of Sayana; these verses were probably composed to give him a suitable reception in a gathering of scholars. In the compilation of the bhashyas, he was assisted by a syndicate of scholars drawn from different places. Sri Bharati Tirtha gave one hundred and twenty scholars of this group *vrittis* or small holdings of land. The long list of donees include Narayana Vajapeyayaji, Pandari (Panduranga) Dikshita and Narahari Somayaji, three leading associates of Sayana. The first was honoured with the title of *mantrasidhi* and the other two of *pedda vidya vallabha*. Harihara II gave them supplementary grants. The descendants of these three scholars continue to enjoy special privileges in Sringeri. The Vidyaranya-pura grant (1386) of Harihara includes *vrittis* given to scholars. The Bhanuvalli copper plate relates to a grant by this emperor to Mahadevendra of Kausika gotra, Apastamba sutra, engaged in the pursuit of Vedanta. Another grant of the emperor rewarded two distinguished disciples of Sri Vidyaranya.<sup>13</sup>

The efflorescence of creative activity in the field of letters and Philosophy was by no means confined to

---

12. ARSIE 50 of 1893

13. MAR 1933 No. 23 (A.D. 1384)



professional scholars or to the Samskrit language. Harihara II is credited with the authorship of two dramas, and his General Iruguppa composed *Nanartharatnamala*, a Samskrit lexicon. The poet Vamana Bhatta Bana, a pupil of Sri Vidyaranya, was patronised by Pedda Komati Vema of Kondavidu. He wrote the *Vemabhupalacharita*, *Nalabhyudaya*, *Raghunatha Charita* *kavya*, *Parvati Parinaya*, etc. The Telugu poets Yerrapregada, a disciple of Sri Vidyaranya, and Nachana Somanatha received royal grants.

In the heyday of Chola rule, to every temple was attached a math with a feeding house and a school. Sri Vidyaranya improved upon this system by placing learned Sanyasins in charge of temples and the attached maths. Grants were made either directly by the emperor or through Sri Vidyaranya to these sanyasins to maintain temple worship, the monasteries and resident scholars. Some of these Maths rose to prominence and became important branch Maths of Sringeri. A grant by prince Chikkaraya (afterwards Virupaksa I) to Satya Tirtha of Muniyur Matha marks the origin of Sakatapuram or Bandegade or Tengan Matha. The head of this Matha was originally the guru of Kota Brahmins in South Kanara district. The Hariharpura Matha has a similar origin through a grant, and so also has Tirthamuttur Matha (Tirthahalli).

A *vritti* was allotted to the old temple of Janardana. The Vidyasankara temple received grants from several sources. Sri Vidyaranya substituted the present golden image of Sri Sarada for the one in sandal wood originally consecrated by Sri Samkara over a Sri Chakra engraved on a rock. The temple was enlarged. The

Bharati Ramanatha temple was built over the *samadhi* of Sri Bharati Tirtha, and the Vidyavisvesvara temple in memory of Sri Vidyaranya (whose original *samadhi* is in Hampi where he died). As adjuncts to these Harihara II founded the agraharas of Vidyaranyapura and Sringapura. Sri Vidyaranya made grants for the worship of Gopinatha in Paschimavahini, a few furlongs from Sringeri on the westward bend of the Tunga, and arranged for the consecration of lingas and Sri Chakras not only in Sringeri and Hampi, but in several other places in South India.



## Chapter VII

The first land grant<sup>14</sup> to Sringeri Matha, which was made in 1346 by Harihara I, his brothers and other relations, consisted of nine villages in Velanad for 'the undisturbed performance of Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha Sri Padangalu varu's *tapas* and the maintenance of the residences of ascetics, attendants and disciples.' In 1356 was granted land of the revenue of three hundred *gadyanas*.<sup>15</sup> Bukka who made this grant during his visit to the Vidyasankara temple had it inscribed on a stone to the north of the Ganapati-Vagisvari temple. It opens appropriately with a homage of Sri Vidya Tirtha. On top of the inscription are figures of Brahma (who proclaimed the Vedas) and Vyasa (who codified them and condensed their message in his sutras). A subsequent land grant<sup>16</sup> of Bukka was of the value of two hundred and twenty two and a half pagodas in Kikundanadu, to which was added a grant by Chikka Raya (afterwards Harihara II) of land in Kikundanadu and Kodanadu. In 1380 Harihara II consolidated all the previous grants and made an additional grant to Sri Vidyaranya.<sup>17</sup> In 1387 again he made a further grant<sup>18</sup> and it was followed by a supplemental grant in 1389-90

14. Sringapura grant (stone) EC VI. Sg 1.

15. MAR 1916 p. 56.

16. MAR 1916 p. 56 ff.

17. *Ibid*; CP's and *Kaditas* in Sg; also MAR 1933 No. 33.

18. Vidyaranyapura grant: MAR 1933 No. 24.

when the emperor visited Sringeri. The total value of all these lands was three thousand and three pagodas, and this gave to Sringeri the name of *urusavirasime*. Below the 1346 grant of Harihara I is inscribed one of the Alupa queen Pandya Chakravarti Sri Kikkayitayi endowing the village of Hosavur in Santalige nadu. Other grants outside Sringeri included two by Bukka I (1375)<sup>19</sup> to Sri Vidyaranya for expenses in the Vidyasankara temple and one by Harihara II (1384) to Sri Vidyaranya.

Out of these grants allotments were made for the maintenance of ascetics, scholars, dependants. etc., and of the temples.

Sringeri which hitherto was a cluster of hermitages now became a *samsthanam* - an *imperium in imperio*. The Samsthanam acquired secular authority and special rights and privileges. From the beginning the gurus held the lands of the samsthanam not as their personal property but as a trust intended for the fostering of the ideals of the pitha, and they exercised their secular authority for the same purpose. Sringeri thereafter attained an eminence and influence hardly equalled and certainly not excelled by any other spiritual institution in the country.

19. Udayabetta Insc. ARSIE 1929 p. 45 and Kundapur Insc. *Ibid* p. 44.



## Chapter VIII

It may be said that a new ethos characterised the century. It embraced a revitalised religious and socio-religious life for the Hindu society, *which perhaps in a diluted form continues to the present day*. This achievement is in fulfilment of the aims that Sri Vidyasankara formulated and were brought about by his two famous disciples Sri Bharati Tirtha and Sri Vidyaranya, and those who came under their magnetic influence. To foster this new spirit, a Hindu state came into being. As a first step, Kumara Kampana, who liquidated the Sultanate in Madurai and other pockets of resistance, restored worship in several temples including those of Kanchi, Srirangam and Madurai. Mysore inscriptions speak of grants to numerous temples under the direction or in honour of Sri Vidyaranya. Such grants multiplied in the centuries that followed. From now on Vijayanagar emperors and their vassals, who in course of time set up independent kingdoms, carried out renovations, with extensions on a lavish scale, of hundreds of temples. Moral regulations and creedal and ritualistic codes were re-interpreted *to suit the changing conditions of the time*, a task to which all the different denominations, Dvaita, Visishtadvaita, Advaita, etc., addressed themselves with remarkable energy, exhibiting a united purpose, however much they differed as philosophical systems and in creedal and ritualistic observances. The *sutras* were explained for

the benefit of the followers of the *smritis*, in simple verses in the *Jaiminiya mala vistara*, the *Yajñatantra sudhanidhi*, the *Prayaschitta sudhanidhi* and the *Kala-nirraya*. The *Subhashita Sudhanidhi*, was a popular collection of moral precepts while the *Purushartha Sudhanidhi* explained the four-fold purposes of a good and full life. The *Parasarasmiti Vyakhyana* and the *Vyavahara-Madhava* provided a compendium of law, both secular and religious. These treatises, together with the growing output of works in the spoken languages, created a commonwealth of letters and a reorganized socio-religious order. It should not be forgotten that this consummation was brought about by all religious sects acting in unison. And equally true is the assertion that the lead was given by the Sringeri Math. The history of religion has on record few instances to excel or even rival the homage, approximating to what is paid to divinity, by contemporary society and the rulers, to Sri Vidya Tirtha and his two illustrious disciples Sri Bharati Tirtha and Sri Vidyaranya. Here are selections from the royal grants :

"The swan Bukka sports happily near the lotus Bharati Tirtha, which having sprung from Vidya Tirtha, possesses the fragrance of joy born of the knowledge of non-dualism and expands by the rays of Vidyaranya."<sup>20</sup>

20. विद्यातीर्थाञ्जनिमणिशुभे भारतीतीर्थपद्मे  
नित्यं वृत्ताद्वयचिदमृतानन्द सौख्यभाजि ।  
विद्यारण्यद्युमणिमहिमप्राप्त लक्ष्मीविलासे  
भूयो भूयो विहरति सुखी बुक्क भूपालहंसः ॥



"May the wonderful glances of Vidyaranya, which resemble showers of camphor dust, garlands of Kalhara flowers, rays of the moon, sandal paste, and waves of the milk-ocean, and which shower the nectar of compassion, bring you happiness."<sup>21</sup>

"Can he be Brahma? We do not see four faces. Can he be Vishnu? He has not got four hands. Can he be Siva? No oddness of the eye is observed. Having thus argued for a long time, the learned have come to the conclusion that Vidyaranya is the Supreme light incarnate."<sup>22</sup>

Poetic conceit and the panegyrists' exaggerations apart, the hagiolatry that is expressed in these verses reflects on the one hand the out-flow of a charismatic beneficence that uplifts minds and hearts, matched on the other hand by the inevitable evocation of devotion and homage.

- 
21. कर्पूरद्रवशीकरप्रणयिनः कल्हारमालानिभा-  
श्चन्द्रालोकसहोदयः परिणतश्रीगंधपाणिधमाः ।  
दुग्धाम्भोधितरङ्ग भङ्ग सुहृदो दीव्यन्तुवः श्रेयसे  
विद्यारण्यगुरोर्दयामृतमुचः श्रेष्ठाः कटाक्षङ्कुराः ॥
22. किं ब्रह्मा न चतुर्मुखः किमुहरिर्दोष्णो चाम्नेडिते  
किंवाशम्भुरसौ नट्टष्टिविषये वैषम्यमालक्ष्यते ।  
इत्यालोच्य चिरं विनिश्चितधियः पञ्चाद्विपश्चिद्रूपाः  
विद्यारण्य गुरुं किमप्यवयविज्योतिः परं मन्यते ॥

## The Age of Vidyaranya

### PART TWO

#### CONTRIBUTION TO VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

By

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER



The Age of Vidyaranya

PART TWO

CONTRIBUTION TO VEDANTA  
PHILOSOPHY

BY  
M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

CONTRIBUTION OF

BHARATI TIRTHA AND VIDYARANYA

TO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADVAITIC THOUGHT

BY

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

Author of "ADVAITA VEDANTA"

---

*Dedicated*

*to*

His Holiness

SRI SRI SRI ABHINAVA VIDYATIRTHA MAHASWAMIGAL

OF DAKSHINAMNAYA

SRI SARADA PEETAM, SRINGERI



## CONTENTS

**Chapter I :** Introductory :—advaitic trends in the Mantras of the Rig Veda — the Upanishads, pre-Sankara thinkers — Bhartruhari, Bhartruprapancha, Brahmadatta, Mandana Misra, Gaudapada — Post-Sankara thinkers, Sureswara, Padmapada, Vachaspati, Prakasatman, Bharati Tirtha, Vidyananya, Madhusudana Saraswati.

**Chapter II :** Metaphysics :— Brahman the subject of Vedanta—Brahman as Sat, Chit and Ananda—Kutastha—Isvara and Jiva — Isvara and his creatorship of the world — three stages in creation.

**Chapter III :** Psychology :—Definition of Jiva — theories of its origin — the limitation theory — the reflection theory — the abhasa theory — Sankara's views — Eka Jiva Vada versus Aneka Jiva Vada — the vestures, the bodies, the states and the psychic forms of the Jiva — the Witness Self.

**Chapter IV :** The doctrine of Maya — difference between Maya and Avidya — in essence both the same — the locus of Maya — Vachaspati's view — the Vivarana view — Vidyananya's view — three standpoints in regard to the study of Maya — Brahman could only be partially concealed by Maya.

**Chapter V :** Logic and Theory of Knowledge — Vidyananya's views have to be gathered from casual hints — six pramanas, Pratyaksa, Anumana — Sruti — tests to



determine the porportful texts — interpretation of Tat Tvam Asi — syntactical unity — how the meaning of a sentence as a whole is grasped — the objections of the logician — whether there is need for Prasamkhyana.

*Chapter VI :* Truth and Error — Criterion of truth — levels of experience — degrees of truth — the highest truth — ignorance the root cause of error — the essence of error — the process by which error arises.

*Chapter VII :* Ethics and Religion — Sadharana dharma and Visesa dharma taken for granted — the need for performing Nitya and Naimittika Karma — the performance of Vedic ritual only a remote aid — Bhakti occupies a more important place — Saguna Brahman and other lesser Gods are fit objects of worship — Dhyana — Jnana the sole means to the final intuition.

*Chapter VIII :* Moksha — the nature of bondage — freedom only by knowledge — the joy of freedom — no inconsistency in the conception of Jivan Mukti — positive advantage — whether the Jivan Mukta will merge, when his body falls, in the conditioned or unconditioned Brahman — Vidyaranya's contribution in the matter of reducing the differences between the Bhamati Prasthanana and the Vivarana Prasthanana.

## PREFACE

Among the post-Sankara advaitins, Bharati Tirtha and Vidyaranya are noteworthy thinkers. Both by virtue of the purity of their personal lives and the depth and clarity of their writings, they occupy a very prominent place among the later advaitins. It will not be an exaggeration if we say that they occupy the topmost place among the post-Sankara writers on Advaita Vedanta.

Apart from their works of a purely religious nature, they have to their credit the following four books bearing on Advaita Vedanta : 1) Vedanta Panchadasi, 2) Jivan Mukti Viveka, 3) Drig-Driysya Viveka and 4) Vivarana Prameya Sangraha. Of these the first and the second are fairly well known to students of Indian Philosophy while the remaining two are not even heard of. But they are very valuable books and richly deserve to be rescued from obscurity.

To make the ordinary run of readers acquainted with the doctrines taught in the Vedanta Panchadasi, I have for some time past, been writing a series of articles in Tamil and the Editor of Sri Sankara Kripa has been kind enough to publish them month after month without a break.

The articles take up the book chapter by chapter and seek to give a fairly connected and coherent account of the ideas developed in each one of them.



In such a mode of treatment there is bound to be overlapping and repetition. Further, a synoptic view of the contents of the book as a whole does not come within the purview of such a treatment.

I was, however, eager to present such a view by rearranging the ideas contained in the entire book and present them in a connected and coherent form under suitable heads such as Metaphysics, Psychology, Logic and Theory of Knowledge, Truth and Error, Ethics and Religion and so forth.

While this idea was taking shape in my mind, my esteemed friend, Gurubhaktaratnam Shri K. R. Venkataraman, Former Editor of Sri Sankara Kripa, suggested to me that I might write a small book setting forth the contribution made by Bharati Tirtha and Vidyaranya to the development of Advaitic Thought and he offered to publish it as Part II of his book on 'The Age of Vidyaranya'.

I welcomed the suggestion as it would be giving me the occasion to present a comprehensive and coherent account of the ideas developed not only in the Vedanta Panchadasi but also those dealt with in the other three books mentioned above.

Accordingly I have given in the following pages a consistent account of the contribution made by the two illustrious thinkers under accepted heads such as Metaphysics, Psychology, the doctrine of Maya, Logic and theory of Knowledge, Truth and Error, Ethics and Religion and the doctrine of Release. There is an

introductory chapter preceding them. It is my earnest hope that the readers of the book will form a fairly adequate and correct notion of the contribution made by the two thinkers to Advaita Vedanta.

It is only in the fitness of things that this book which deals with the thought of two previous Pontiffs of the Sarada Peetam, Sringeri, should be dedicated to the present Pontiff of that Gadi. I am deeply grateful to His Holiness Sri Sri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha Mahaswamigal for having accepted this, my humble, tribute.

I am also thankful to Shri K. R. Venkataraman for the confidence that he reposed in me by asking me to write this book and for the encouraging words that he wrote to me from time to time. But for the gracious blessings of His Holiness and the encouragement given by my esteemed friend, I do not think I would have been able to accomplish this rather difficult task.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not express my warm thanks to Shri M. R. Srinivasan and Shri M. R. Mathrubhootam, both residents of my village, who so generously offered to get the script typed as a labour of love and in the spirit of service to the cause of Advaita Vedanta. The subject matter was wholly new to them and, to add to their difficulty, the manuscript was not quite legible, my hand being unsteady owing to age. The work of typing such a script must have taxed them a great deal and I ask them to accept my heart-felt thanks. There are, as



may be expected, a few typographical errors in the type-script but they could not be helped.

Lastly, I must express my grateful thanks to Shri P. Subrahmaniam, President, Committee of Management, Sankara Hall and Sankara Institute of Philosophy and Culture, Calcutta, the publisher, for undertaking the responsibility of publishing the book and for having printed the book in a very neat and attractive manner.

Manathattai,  
Kulittalai,  
Tamil Nadu.

**M. K. Venkatarama Iyer**

28-12-1972.

## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTORY

Advaita Vedanta has a long history. This long period falls into three divisions, the Pre-Sankara, Sankara and Post-Sankara periods. The pre-Sankara period starts as early as the time of the Rig Veda and extends up to the advent of Sankara. The Post-Sankara period starts with the direct disciples of Sankara like Sureswara and Padmapada and goes right up to the present time.

Though several mantras of the Rig Veda give clear evidence of advaitic leanings, special mention must be made of the Nasadiya Sukta, otherwise known as the 'Hymn of Creation'. This hymn is remarkable for its speculative tone. All knowledge, it is said, begins in wonder and worship. This twin attitude of wonder and worship can be clearly seen in this hymn. In the spirit of true philosophy it enquires into the origin of the world. "Did it have its origin in existence or non-existence? Who could enlighten us on this point? The Gods were not then born and hence it would be no use looking to them for light on this question. Even the Lord in Heaven could not explain this mystery to us". Apart from the sense of mystery which this poem breathes, it is also remarkable for the impersonal tone in which the Highest is described. It is called *Tad Ekam*. It means 'That One'. This way of characterising it is intended to convey the idea that



it simply existed and that nothing more could be said about it. It could not be described as existent or non-existent, as death or deathlessness, as darkness or light. It emphasises the essential incomprehensibility of the Highest Being. In this respect it comes very close to the advaitic conception of Brahman as attributeless. It is, therefore, no wonder that Sankara makes frequent references to this hymn in his writings. In his commentary on Vedanta Sutra II. 1. 6 he makes a reference to this poem in support of his contention that Brahman cannot be known by perception or by inference. Again in Vedanta Sutra II. iv. 8 he quotes a few lines from this hymn to show that the *Tad Ekam* simply existed and, though it is said to have breathed, the breathing should not be interpreted literally as then there was no air to breathe.

The concept of Maya, the central doctrine in Advaita Vedanta, can also be traced to the earliest mantras of the Rig Veda. In Rig Veda IV. vii. 33. 3. there is an unmistakable reference to this concept. The term is not used in any vague or general sense but almost exactly in the same sense in which it is employed by Sankara. It is said in this mantra that Indra, meaning, of course, the Highest God, just to make Himself known, transformed Himself into many forms by means of His powers of Maya. The idea intended to be conveyed is that Brahman appears as Isvara, as jiva and as the world due to His association with adjuncts like the internal organ (antah karana) and the external sense-organs. It is needless to give more examples to show that the beginnings of advaitic thought could be traced back to the earliest mantras of the Rig Ved.

As for the Upanishads, it is unnecessary to labour the point. The trend of thought in the classical Upanishads, especially the Chandogya and the Brihadaranyaka, is definitely in favour of advaita Vedanta. Uddalaka's instruction to Svetaketu begins by posing the question relating to the one reality by knowing which one could claim to know everything else. The answer is given in terms of the '*Sat*', or bare existence which is the ultimate ground of the world of diversity which presents itself to our perception. This '*Sat*', it is further stated, was one without a second. It continues to be so even now. The idea is that the world of diversity and change is only a super-imposition on this '*Sat*'. If we have eyes to see we could discover, behind and beneath all the diversities of the world of names and forms, the one changeless, uniform '*Sat*' as its substrate.

Little need be said about the trend of Yagnavalkya's discourses in the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad. In his address to his wife, Maitreyi, as well as in his instruction to Emperor Janaka, he makes it clear that the Highest Reality is beyond mind and speech, that it could, therefore, be described only in negative terms as 'not this, 'not this', and that, nevertheless, it is no non-entity but the very self in us. It is the unfailing light which illumines not only the states of the mind but also the heavenly luminaries like the sun and the moon.

After the thinkers of the upanishadic period, we have to make special reference to Bhartruhari, Brahmadatta, Bhartru Prapancha, Mandana Misra and Gaudapada. Of these Gaudapada's thought, as he has developed it



in his 'Karika' on the Mandukya Upanishad, comes very close to the line of thought adopted by Sankara. Hence Sankara makes very respectful references to him in his commentary on the Vedanta Sutra.

In the Post-Sankara period the leading thinkers are Padmapada, Sureswara, Vachaspati Misra, Prakasatman, Sarvajnatma Muni, Bharati Tirtha, Vidyaranya, Madhusudana Saraswati and Appayya Diksita. In more recent times, the advaitic torch has been kept alive by Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Aurobindo, Ramana Maharishi, the pontiffs of the Sarada Peetam, Sringeri, especially Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati and interpreters like Radhakrishnan and Hiriyanna.

Among the Post-Sankara thinkers, though Sureswara, Vachaspati and Prakasatman have something fresh to say, special mention, however, must be made of Bharati Tirtha and Vidyaranya. Both of them occupied the Sringeri throne in succession and there is evidence to show that they collaborated in their literary endeavours. Their definitely philosophical works are: (1) the Vivarana Prameya Sangraha, (2) the Drig-Drisya Viveka, (3) the Vedanta Panchadasi and (4) the Jivan Mukti Viveka. It is neither necessary nor is it possible to assess the respective contribution made by each one of the two thinkers to the development of advaitic thought. Since much of their work is the product of joint labour, we may attribute the whole of it either to Bharati Tirtha or to Vidyaranya. This will mean no injustice to either of them. Both of them are luminaries of great splendour in the advaitic horizon and both take a very high

place among the religious and philosophical thinkers of the post-Sankara period. We may go so far as even to say that they take their rank only next to the great Sankara himself. In what follows we will speak of Vidyaranya without coupling his name with that of Bharati Tirtha. What we will say about Vidyaranya, will be equally true of Bharati Tirtha also. We may note in passing that the name Vidyaranya denotes an individual who was very much alive and kicking in his times and that it does not merely connote an attribute, 'forest of learning', which was ascribed to both Bharati Tirtha and Madavacharya as an honorific epithet.

The thought that Vidyaranya has developed in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha, Drig-Drisya Viveka, Panchadasi and Jivan Mukti Viveka can be presented under the following heads: 1. Metaphysics, 2. Psychology, 3. the doctrine of Maya, 4. Logic and theory of knowledge, 5. Truth and Error, 6. Ethics, 7. Religion and Ethics 8. the doctrine of Jivan Mukti. These are by no means clear-cut divisions. In the actual treatment it will be found that they cross and recross one another's path. They are only broad divisions introduced for purposes of clear presentation.



## Chapter II

### METAPHYSICS

The term 'metaphysics' literally means that which comes after (meta) science (physics). When Aristotle's writings came to be classified, his papers on science were given the first place and his speculations relating to supersensuous reality brought up the rear. The name 'metaphysics', arising from this physical arrangement, acquired a deeper significance in course of time. Philosophy comes at the end of science not only in the physical sense but also in the logical sense. In the latter sense, philosophy means the fulfilment of the sciences. What brings out the ultimate import of scientific knowledge is metaphysics. The term 'Vedanta' also carries the same double sense. It stands not only for what comes at the end of the mantra and Brahmana portions of the Veda, but connotes also the speculations which bring out the final import of the earlier portions of the Veda. The word 'anta' and the cognate word 'end' have this double sense.

#### 1. Brahman as 'Sat'

What we should, therefore, look for in the vedanta is a description of the nature of the Highest Reality and man's relation to it. This Highest reality is called Brahman which literally means the utmost

limit of growth. Being the Highest, it should naturally be the sole reality. The Chandogya Upanishad speaks of it as 'the one only without a second, एकमेवाद्वितीयम् । Each of the three words which go to make this sentence carries a special significance. The word एक (one) signifies that Brahman or 'Sat' has no internal divisions. It follows that it has no parts. It is not an organism consisting of various members nor is it a whole made up of parts. A tree, for example, admits of differentiation into the stem, the branches, the twigs, the leaves, the flowers and the fruits. But such internal differentiation is denied of Brahman by the word एक (one). The second word एव (only) denies the possibility of comparison with similar things. A mango tree, for example, can be compared with other trees which are similar though different in certain respects. But so far as Brahman is concerned there is nothing similar to it with which it could be compared. A tree, finally, can be contrasted with dissimilar things like stocks and stones. Needless to say that there are no dissimilar things with which Brahman could be contrasted. The denial of dissimilar things is signified by the word अद्वितीयम् (without a second). In effect, this sentence denies, Sajatiya, Vijatiya and Swagata bheda of Brahman. It, therefore, stands in a class by itself. It is *suigeneris*. It cannot be brought under a genus which is higher than itself nor can it be distinguished from other cognate species by a differentia. The three kinds of differentiation which may be considered possible even for the Existent reality are negated in order by the three expressions, one, only, without a second, which



signify homogeneity, the emphatic restriction and the denial of a second thing. No parts can be postulated of the *sat* (Existent) for it is not possible to demonstrate or show any parts in it. Name and form are not its parts as they have not come out then (that is before creation). (Vedanta Panchadasi II. 21-22.)\*

Since Brahman is bare existence devoid of any content, it is indefinable. It cannot be conceived by the mind in terms of any of the categories of the understanding. It cannot, therefore, be thought of as a substance possessed of attributes, or as a cause in relation to an effect or as a whole made up of parts or as an identity in the midst of differences. The only description that could be given of it is that it exists. अस्तित्वेवोल्बन्धव्यः (Katha II. iii. 13.) "All this was only bare existence at the beginning" (Chandogya VI. ii. 1) Before creation or manifestation what existed was the bare '*Sat*'. We are to understand that the world of diversity which appears later is a superimposition on the bare '*Sat*'. "As this was, before creation, only the Existent, the one only without a second, name and form did not exist then. Such is the teaching of Aruni (Uddalaka to his son Svetaketu)" (V. P. II. 19).

By an analysis of the gross elements, Vidyaranya shows that what is common to all of them is the fact of existence. Ether, air, fire, water and earth have their own special properties. In respect of their peculiar features they are mutually exclusive.

\* Swami Gnanananda Bharati's translation of the Vedanta Panchadasi is adopted throughout this book.

One cannot function for another. Ether is not present in the remaining four elements. Similarly neither air, nor fire nor water nor earth is to be found in the other four gross elements. If an element is determined to be water, for example, it follows that it is not ether or fire or air or earth. One shuts out the others. But there is one fact that is common to all of them and that is the fact of '*Existence*'. When, by discrimination, the '*Sat*' is separated from the elements, the latter will become unreal. By the process of analysis the elements and their products are eliminated one by one. What remains is not the void but the positive fact of existence. It survives the process of analysis and elimination. When the unreality of the elements, the evolutes of the elements and Maya has been deeply imbibed, the conclusion that '*Sat*', the real thing, is without a second will never undergo any change," (V. P. II. 98)

"Of the unreal there is no existence and what is real is never non-existent" (Gita II. 16.) Thus the real and the existent are shown to be closely bound together. It is as meaningless to speak of what is real as non-existent as it is to speak of the unreal as existent. There is no reality without existence and, by the same token, there is no existence without being real. When the unreal is eliminated by discrimination what is left over is bare existence which is its substrate. Sankara has clarified this point in his commentary on Gita II 16. "Every effect, such as a pot, is unreal because it is not perceived before its production and after its destruction; likewise the cause such as clay is unreal because it is not perceived



apart from its cause. Here the objector might say : "then it comes to this, nothing at all exists" But no such objection applies here. Every fact of experience involves a two-fold consciousness, the consciousness of something real and the consciousness of something unreal. That is said to be real of which our consciousness does not fail and that to be unreal of which our consciousness fails. Thus the distinction of reality and unreality depends on our consciousness." (Mahadeva Sastri's translation).

Commenting on the Taittiriya text '*Satyam Jnanam Anantam* brahma' Sankara makes a similar observation regarding the nature of what is real. सत्यमिति यद्वूपेण यन्निश्चितं तद्वूपं न व्यभिचरति तत्सत्यं ; यद्वूपेण यन्निश्चितं तद्वूपं व्यभिचरति तदनृतमिन्मुच्यते । "Whatever does not deviate from the form in which it has been once ascertained to be is real, and whatever deviates from the form in which it has been once ascertained to be is unreal (Mahadeva Sastri's translation.) As Vachaspati remarks in his Bhamati, "that which is constant in what is variable, that is different from the latter as a string from the flowers strung on it". What is real does not suffer sublation by anything at any time or place.

In Vedanta Panchadasi II. 32. 46 Vidyananya undertakes an examination of the nihilist doctrine that in the beginning there was only non-existence. If this is so, he asks how we can make the transition to existence. Existence and non-existence are polar opposites and there can be no passage from the latter to the former. The upanishad asks how the existent could come out of the non-existent. कथं असतः सज्जायेत ।

The nihilist may say that just as the world of names and forms is superimposed on the bare 'Sat' even so existence may be superimposed on what is non-existent. But this contention is untenable, for all superimposition implies a positive existent basis or substrate. Non-existence is not such a positive basis on which existence may be super-imposed. 'If you urge that both name and form are imposed even on the existent reality, then tell me on what is your imposition based ? No mistaken perception is any where experienced without a substratum." V.P. II 35.

Even the mirage has a positive basis. न मृगवृक्षादयोऽपि निरास्पदा भवन्ति । In the Pancha Mahabhuta, Viveka Vidyananya adopts the objective method of study and shows that what uniformly underlies all the names and forms of the world of diversity is bare existence. In the next two chapters he makes a subjective approach to the problem and shows by a thorough-going analysis of the five sheaths, the annamaya, the pranamaya, the manomaya, the vijnanamaya and anandamaya, that what remains when all the five vestures are transcended is not the void but the self which animates all of them. "As the witnessing consciousness remains when the five kosas are eliminated, that consciousness itself is the true nature of oneself. It is not possible to ascribe voidness to it" (P.D. III 22).

The physical body is the annamaya Kosa, the subtle body comprises the pranamaya, monomaya and vijnana maya kosas and the causal body is made up of the ananda maya kosa. The physical body is lost sight of in sleep and the subtle body comprising the three sheaths lapses



in the state of dreamless sleep. The causal body, made up of the anandamaya kosa vanishes in the state of samadhi.

Though the content of the three states, waking, dream and dreamless sleep, varies, the light that illumines them is the light of the self. "In all the three states the cognising entity is the same" (V.P.I.3.7)

## 2. Brahman as Chit

Brahman is self-luminous since it is characterised as Prajnana ghana in the Upanishad. While it illumines all the states of the human mind and all the objects of the world including the heavenly luminaries, it stands in no need of being illumined by any other luminous body. न दीपस्य अन्य दीपेच्छा । One lamp does not require to be revealed by another lamp.

Since Brahman is the ultimate source of light it necessarily underlies all the so-called cognising agents. All knowing subjects derive their light from this source. Hence it is the substrate of all subjects. Being the presupposition of the subject-object relation, it can never become an object in relation to any subject. It follows that it is not known in the way in which other things are known. विज्ञातारं अरे केन विज्ञानीयात् । By what means can we know the knower? It stands self-revealed.

Nor does it stand in need of any proof. It is self-certifying, स्वतः सिद्ध । All the Pramanas derive their authority from this source. Neither pratyaksha nor anumana

nor even Sruti can have any authority but for the light which illumines them. सिद्धे ह्यात्मनि प्रमातरि प्रमित्सोः प्रमाणान्वेषणा भवति । "When the existence of the knower, the Pramata, is already determined, then only is possible a search for proper authorities on the part of the knower with a view to obtain right knowledge". येनेदं सर्वं विज्ञानाति तंकेन विज्ञानीयात् । Through what should one know that owing to which all this is known" (Swami Madhavananda's translation).

In this connection, Vidyaranya takes exception to the views of some other thinkers who do not hold that consciousness is integral to Brahman. The Prabhakaras, for instance, believe that consciousness is an adventitious quality of the Self like desire and aversion. They maintain that consciousness, like desire and aversion, is a quality that is produced in the Self when it comes into contact with the mind due to the potency of adrshta. When this contact is snapped, as in sleep, the Self lapses into unconsciousness. The Naiyayikas also take the same view. "The Prabhakaras and the Tarkikas ascribe the nature of unconsciousness to the Atma. Atma is a substance like Akasa ; consciousness is its quality as sound is of Akasa ; Desire, aversion and effort, virtue and sin and the mental impressions made by them - these are said to be its qualities like consciousness. When there is the contact for the Atma with the mind on account of Adrshta, the qualities are manifested. When the Adrshta is exhausted, they lapse in sleep." (V.P. VI. 88-90)

According to the Bhattas the Atma is both conscious and unconscious. "The Bhattas ascribe this nature of



inertness-cum-consciousness to the Atma by inferring a hidden consciousness. This inference of consciousness arises from the recollection after getting up from sleep. There is a recollection of inertness thus. "I was inert then and slept". Without an experience of inertness at that time, such a recollection is in no way intelligible. The non-ceasing of the sight of the seer in deep sleep is mentioned in the veda. Therefore the Atma is in Himself accompanied by consciousness and unconsciousness just as a fire-fly which is both bright and dark". V.P. VI 95-97.

The Sankhyas do not agree with this view. They hold that Purusha is pure sentience, but owing to its false identification with Prakriti, it forgets its real nature and experiences misery.

Vidyaranya refers to these views only to show that they are imperfect and, by contrast, the advaitic view that the Atman is self-luminous, that it stands like a silent spectator of the states of the mind, and is, therefore, not affected in the least by its joys and sorrows, is the only correct view.

### 3. Brahman as Ananda

इयं आत्मा परानन्दः परमप्रेमास्पदः यतः । "This Atman is the highest bliss as it is the object of the highest love." It is a fact of common experience that our love is greater for those who are very near relations than it is for those who are distant and remote relations. If we pursue this to its logical conclusion we will have to admit that our love is greatest for

our own self because it is the nearest to us ; in fact it is our very self. Hence it is, as the Upanishad says, dearer than son, dearer than wealth and dearer than everything else. प्रेयः पुत्रात् प्रेयः वित्तात् प्रेयः अन्यस्मात् सर्वस्मात् । (Br. Up. I. iv. 8) It is loved for its own sake and not as instrumental for something else. Objects which give pleasure at one time may cease to do so at other times. What is loved at one time may become an object of hatred at some other time, and what is hated at one time may become an object of love at some other time. No object in the external world is dear to us all the time. By contrast, the Atman is the only object that is loved at all times for its own sake. Sankara has made this clear in Sata-Sloki (10). The Atman is a value in its own right. We value only those things which afford happiness to us.

For proof that the self is the object of the greatest love Vidyaranya refers to the fact that no man likes to put an end to his own life. Even when he takes the desperate step of committing suicide, it is the body that he wants to get rid of. "If it is said that sometimes the desire to die is seen in people who are overwhelmed by disease or anger and that, as there is hatred of the Atman, it is capable of being abandoned, it is not so. The status of the Atman is not in the body which is capable of being thrown off. That status is only in the thrower. There is no such hatred in the thrower. If there is hatred, however, in a thing which can be thrown off, what is the harm ? (V.P. XII. 28.29.)

For additional proof that the Self is the object of the highest love, Vidyaranya refers to the conversation



between Yajnavalkya and his wife. He tells her that the object of our greatest love is the Atman and that the love that we bear to other things is only because it is instrumental to the happiness of the Atman. "The affection which the wife has towards the husband is not for the husband's sake but only for her own sake ; similarly the husband has affection towards his wife only for his own sake and never for the sake of the wife. Even when there is mutual inducement, the conduct of the husband and the wife is similar, that is, only because of their respective individual desires." (V.P. XII. 8.9.)

The happiness that we find in the things of the world is only a pale reflection of the bliss of Brahman. It is just by a minute fraction of the bliss of Brahman that they commend themselves to us. Strictly speaking, the happiness that we seem to find in them is by an illegitimate transfer. We superimpose the bliss of Brahman on the objects of the world and fondly believe that we derive pleasure from them. We forget that real bliss is in Brahman and we go about seeking it in the wrong direction. Our behaviour in this respect is like that of the musk-deer which, not realising that it is carrying the musk in the hind part of its own body, keeps running about the forest in search of it.

The ephemeral nature of the pleasure that we derive from the objects of the world is a well-worn theme. It lasts for a few moments and then it turns to misery. येहि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एवते । This is the Lord's verdict in the Gita (V.22). "The pleasures that arise from attachments are only sources of pain."

"That which springs from the contact of the senses and their objects and which is like nectar at first and like poison at the end, such pleasure is said to be passionate." (Gita XVIII 38.)

It is not always that we succeed in securing even these objects which give fleeting pleasure. More often than not, our efforts to secure them meet with failure. Something or other stands in the way. Things work at cross purposes. What happens is that we get what we do not want and fail to get what we want. These disappointments cause any amount of misery. If the obstructions are beyond our power to remove, our misery becomes all the greater. If perchance we get what we want, there is the fear that it may be snatched away from our hands. What the fates give with their right hand, they may snatch away with their left. If others are more fortunate than ourselves, we grow envious of them. This is how we make ourselves unhappy by looking upon sensuous pleasures as the goal of our life. Sooner or later we are bound to realise the utter futility of this endeavour. The sooner we realise that real happiness is not in the objects of sense but in the Atman the better for us. Sense must dawn on us to arrive at this realisation. The disillusionment that comes as we grow older will open our eyes and we will be able to see things in their proper perspective.

There is a common belief that some objects give more pleasure than others and that some people enjoy more happiness than others. The Upanishads confirm this belief when they speak of various orders of



beings, graded in respect of the happiness that they enjoy. In Taittiriya II. viii and Brihadharanyaka IV iii 33 there is reference to the calculus of happiness. We are to imagine a young man who is fortunate in every respect. He is strong and healthy. He is well educated. He has plenty of wealth. The happiness that such a young man enjoys is to be treated as the unit. Then there is mention of eleven orders of beings, Brahma coming at the end. In this list each succeeding order of being is said to enjoy a hundred-fold more happiness than the one which precedes it. If the multiplication is carried out, the figure that we get at the end will give us some idea of the bliss of Brahma. But even this is an inadequate description of the bliss that *is* Brahman.

Really there are no grades in bliss itself. It is one and entire like the *Sat* and *Chit* aspects of Brahman. Just as there appear to be differences in respect of existence and consciousness owing to their association with extraneous adjuncts, even so there appear to be grades of happiness owing to the purity or impurity of the psychosis of the mind which reflects it. Psychoses are of three kinds, the pure, the turbulent and the dull. If Sattva predominates in the psychosis it is pure and it reflects the bliss of Brahman more perfectly than when rajas or tamas predominates. But even in the sattva-dominated psychosis the bliss of Brahman is not fully reflected. It is the man who is not smitten by any kind of desire, the अक्राम हृत्, who enjoys the bliss of Brahman in full. One should firmly turn his back on the objects of the world and set the goal of his life in the realm of spirit to be able to enjoy the bliss that *is* Brahman.

We cannot worship at two altars. God and Mammon do not go together. One shuts out the other. Maitreyi firmly rejected the pleasures of the world to taste the bliss of Brahman. Vidyanarya has made out these points in V. P. XV 12-22.

Existence, consciousness and bliss—these three are the essential characteristics of Brahman. They constitute Brahman's swarupa laksana. They are not to be treated as three attributes inherent in Brahman. They are neither attributes nor aspects nor parts of Brahman. Rather they are of the very nature of Brahman. Like Sattva, rajas and tamas which are constitutive of Prakriti as the Sankhya system understands it, *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ananda* are the constituents of Brahman. The human intellect, being unable to grasp it in its real nature, breaks it up and speaks of Brahman as possessing three attributes. Strictly speaking, it is not even a positive characterisation of Brahman. The three constituents are mentioned only to deny that Brahman is either non-existent or insentient or unhappy. In a severely non-dual system there can be no positive description of Brahman. Only negative descriptions are admissible. Vachaspati Misra has said in his Bhamati. "Of Brahman we do not affirm unity, but only deny duality".

Since they are constitutive of Brahman, they are inseparable. *Sat* viewed apart from *Chit* and *Ananda* will be reduced to something insentient and miserable, similarly *Chit* taken in isolation will be reduced to a non-entity. The same is the case with *Ananda* if it is separated from *Sat* and *Chit*.

In his Drg Drsy Viveka Vidyanarya says that every



object has five characteristics. It exists, it shines, it is lovable, it has a form and it has a name. Of these five, the first three belong to Brahman and the last two to the finite world.

अस्ति भातिप्रियं रूपं नामचेत्यंशपञ्चकम् ।

आद्या त्रयं ब्रह्मरूपं जगद्रूपं ततो द्वयम् ॥

As an instance of name and form being illusory, Vidyanaraya refers to spatiality (avakasa) which is the distinctive feature of ether. It is a mode of Maya and consequently illusory. "The first evolute is akasa. It exists, it shines and it is also lovable. Spatiality is its form. That form is unreal as it is derived from Maya. Those three, however, existence, luminosity and lovability are not unreal as they are derived from Brahman." V. P. XIII 67.

#### 4. The Kutastha

In the Kutastha Deepa Vidyanaraya defines the Kutastha as the self which witnesses the states of the two bodies, the gross and the subtle. It is so called because like the blacksmith's anvil it remains unchanged. While other things are beaten to shape on the anvil, the anvil itself remains unchanged. Even so, the Kutastha, while it illumines the vicissitudes of the gross and the subtle body, itself remains unaffected by the latter. It is simply the silent witness having no part or lot in what takes place in the two bodies. In his Siddhanta Lesa Sangraha, Appayya Diskshita states Vidyanaraya's view of the Kutastha as follows देहद्वयाधिष्ठानभूतं कूटस्थं चैतन्यं स्वावच्छेदकस्य देहद्वयस्य साक्षादीक्षणं निर्विकारक-

न्वात् साक्षीति उच्यते । It is unattached. It is the foundational intelligence that reveals both the presence of the mental modes and their absence. The difference between Brahman and Kutastha is nominal.

#### 5. Isvara and Jiva

As distinct from Brahman and Kutastha, both Isvara and Jiva are reflections. Hence they are illusory and unreal. Isvara is the reflection of Brahman in Maya while Jiva is the reflection of the same Brahman in Avidya. The difference between Maya and Avidya is only in respect of their composition. The Prakriti in which pure Sattva dominates is Maya while the prakriti in which impure Sattva dominates is Avidya. In another context Vidyanaraya says that in Maya the power to project is prominent while in Avidya the power to conceal is much in evidence.

He illustrates the relation in which Brahman, Kutastha, Isvara and Jiva stand to one another by means of the example of Ether reflected in a suitable medium. There is unlimited Akasa called Mahakasa; then there is the akasa delimited by the pot (ghatakasa); then there is the akasa reflected in the water contained in the pot (jalakasa) and lastly there is the akasa reflected in the particles of water which are contained in the clouds (Meghakasa). Brahman is likened to the Mahakasa, Kutastha to the Ghatakasa, Isvara to the Meghakasa and Jiva to the Jalakasa. If the reflection of akasa in the water contained in the pot is small, that of akasa in the water particles contained in the clouds is large. It is to be noted that in both cases akasa



is a reflection in water. The difference is only in respect of the size of the reflection. Mahakasa and Ghata-kasa are not reflected in any medium. In the latter case akasa appears under a limitation while in the former case it is unlimited. Since Kutastha is associated with the two bodies it is said to be limited by them. It is, therefore, likened to the akasa that is delimited by the pot. Brahman is unlimited and it is appropriately likened to the unlimited Ether (Mahakasa). This illustration not only brings out the reflected character of Isvara and Jiva as distinct from Brahman and Kutastha which are not reflections, it also brings out the difference between Brahman and Kutastha on the one hand and between Isvara and Jiva on the other.

Vachaspati thinks that both Isvara and Jiva are the products of Avidya. Avidya has its locus in the Jiva and its content in Isvara. Just as knowledge is the knowledge of some one and is the knowledge of something, even so ignorance is the ignorance of some one and it is the ignorance about something. Just as knowledge implies a knowing subject and a known object even so ignorance presupposes a subject and an object. It is located in the Jiva and has Isvara for its content.

He does not believe that Maya and Avidya are different or that Isvara is a reflection of Brahman in one medium and that the Jiva is a reflection of the same Brahman in another medium. Avidya is the adjunct. Its characteristic is to break up the whole and introduce differentiation where there is really none. The differentiation is bi-polar. At one end appears the Jiva

and at the other end appears Isvara. The adjunct is the intellect. Its nature is to break up the original integral whole into a subject in relation to an object. As a result of this breaking up, Brahman appears as the Jiva which is the subject and as Isvara which is the object. This is Vachaspati's view.

Prakasatman, the author of Panchapadika Vivarana thinks that Jiva is a reflection of Isvara. If it is remembered that Isvara is itself a reflection, it will become clear that according to Prakasatman, the Jiva is a reflection of a reflection. But neither Vachaspati nor Vidyananda agrees with this view. It will be seen that in this respect there is more agreement between Vidyananda and Prakasatman. Though Vidyananda defends the stand of the author of the Vivarana in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha, he is not a whole-hogger. He uses his discretion and tries to minimise the difference between the two Prasthanas as much as possible.

The only difference between Vachaspati and Vidyananda is that while the former believes that both Isvara and Jiva are reflections of Brahman in the same medium, viz., Avidya, the latter believes that the two are reflections of Brahman in two different media, namely, Maya and Avidya. But this is a distinction without a difference. There is very little to differentiate Maya from Avidya. We will see later that Vidyananda gives in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha a definition which is equally applicable to Maya and Avidya. The important point is that according to both Vachaspati and Vidyananda, Isvara and Jiva are independent reflec-



tions of Brahman. The Jiva is not the reflection of a reflection. In its relation to Brahman it stands on a footing of equality with Isvara. Hence both have the same ontological status. Both stand or fall together. If, due to the dawn of right knowledge, the Jiva proves unreal, so does Isvara. The Jiva merges in Kutastha and Isvara in Brahman. The Kutastha, as we have noted already, is likened to the Ghatakasa and the Jiva to the Jalakasa. It is but natural that the akasa reflected in the water contained in the pot should merge in the akasa delimited by the pot; it is equally natural that the akasa that is reflected in the particles of water contained in the clouds should merge in unlimited ether. Between the akasa delimited by the pot and the unlimited akasa, the difference is due to an adventitious adjunct and, therefore, artificial. If the adjunct is knocked down, Ghatakasa merges in Mahakasa. This means that the difference between the Kutastha and Brahman is more verbal than material. Though the Jiva and Isvara merge in the first instance in the Kutastha and Brahman, ultimately they merge in the same Brahman.

## 6. Isvara

Isvara is the real cause of the world. He is its efficient and its material cause as well. He is, therefore, its abhinnaimitta upadana karana. Sruti supports this view. The statement 'It desired', तेदेक्षत्, implies that Isvara is the efficient cause of the world, since desiring is the act of a sentient being. Such a sentient being can only be the efficient cause. The statement 'may I become many' बहु, स्याम् implies that Isvara is the

material cause as well. What can assume many different forms and names must necessarily be the material cause. Clay, for example, may assume different forms and names such as pot, jar, pitcher and so forth. Desiring belongs to the potter, while assuming different forms and names belongs to clay. In regard to the creation of the world, we do not have two different causes, one efficient and the other material, but only one. That is Isvara. He combines in himself the duty of desiring and the duty of assuming many different forms and names.

Such a view stands to reason also. If Isvara were the efficient or material cause alone, he would require to be supplemented by another cause. This other cause would act as a limit on him. He would no longer be infinite. It would also take away from his omnipotence. If he should stand in need of another entity to complete his work, he could hardly be looked upon as all-powerful. The notion of Isvara being both the efficient and material cause of the world need not be considered unintelligible since there is the example of the spider weaving the web out of its own saliva. This is the example given in the upanishad.

Isvara is not only the creator of the world but also its sustainer and destroyer. It is clay which sustains the pot and it is into clay that the pot returns when it is broken. The threads sustain the cloth and when the latter is torn it becomes threads again. It is gold that sustains the chain and it is into gold that the chain returns when it is melted. These examples, given by Vidyaranya, serve to reinforce the conclusion



that Isvara is not only the efficient cause of the world but also its material cause since it is said in the Upanishads that Isvara creates, sustains and absorbs the world into himself at the end. It is clear that he does not agree with Vachaspati's view that Isvara fashions the world out of the various avidyas lodged in the several jivas. The jivas are both agents and enjoyers. They form part of the product of Maya. They could, therefore, have nothing to do with the creation of the world.

To clarify his position still further, Vidyaranya wants us to understand what exactly he means by saying that Isvara is both the efficient and material cause of the world. This view shuts out both the theory of origination and the theory of modification. It is not to be identified with the arambha vada of the Naiyayikas who maintain that the world takes shape by the coming together of atoms nor is it to be identified with the Parinama vada of the Sankhyas who maintain that the world is the outcome of the evolution of Prakriti. According to the Naiyayika the atoms are the material cause of the world and Isvara its efficient cause. According to the Sankhya, Prakriti is the material cause of the world and the efficient cause, if there is one at all, is Purusha. According to both arambha and parinama vada, the two causes are different. But according to the vedanta, both are rolled up into one. Hence both the theory of origination and the theory of modification are ruled out.

The only other theory is that of apparent modification. Without undergoing any real modification, Isvara projects the appearance of the world. Since He remains intact

he is the efficient cause and since he projects the appearance of the world, he is the material cause. The example of rope appearing as the snake will make the point clear. The snake comes out of the rope and ultimately disappears into the rope. Hence rope is the material cause of the snake. But all the time the rope remains a rope. It does not undergo the least change. Hence it must be regarded as the efficient and material cause of the appearance. The view that Isvara is both the efficient and material cause of the world, if interpreted properly, culminates in what is known as Vivarta Vada. "The mere appearance of a different state is the seeming as in the rope appearing as the snake. The seeming is possible even in things which are partless as in the attribution of a flooring or dirtiness to the sky. Therefore, let it be granted that the world is a seeming that is superimposed on the impartite Isvara. The power of Maya is the creator of that seeming just like the powers of a magician" V.P. XIII. 9-10.

Thinkers hold different views about the relation between God and the world. Vidyaranya refers to them in V.P.VI. 105-120. He shows that all of them are imperfect for one reason or other. By contrast, he shows that the advaitic view is the only correct one. The Sruti passage 'know Maya as the primal cause and God as the wielder of Maya' supports the advaitic view.

In the Vivarana Prameya Sangraha, Vidyaranya maintains that Isvara is the sole cause of the world, but in his Panchadasi he modifies his views a little and makes the jiva also partly responsible for it. The world



is not a chaos but a cosmos. Careful observation shows that there is a great deal of design in its making. The elements have fixed qualities. Each has its own function and one could not function for another. The heavenly bodies move each in its own path. They never come into headlong collision. The events that take place within the world exhibit causal relation. No event takes place without a sufficient cause. There is no such thing as accident in the world. The law of causal relation applies to the voluntary actions of human beings also. As we sow so we reap. No one can escape the consequences of his deeds. Every individual reaps the rewards of his deeds at the proper time and in the proper place. The world, therefore, is so designed as to make for the enjoyment of the finite selves. Design implies not only a designer but also one who profits by it. The purpose for which a house is built is also one of its causes. It is what is known as the final cause. The jivas are the final cause of the world since the latter furnishes the environment for the enjoyment of the rewards arising from their deeds. The world is, therefore, created by Isvara for the enjoyment of the finite selves. As our author puts it; 'it is ईश्वर सृष्टम् जीव भोग्यम् (V.P.IV.18). "The cosmos which has its origination in the Lord's contemplation, ईश्वर, finds its completion in the production of the jiva. Of the entire external world of the living and the non-living, the Lord is the artificer. Of the internal world of transmigratory existence which begins in the state of waking and ends in release, the jiva is the author".

There are three stages in the process of creation, the unmanifest, the partially manifest and the fully

manifest. Isvara contains the world within himself. In this unmanifest condition it is known only as Isvara. In the second stage it becomes partially manifest and it is now known as Hiranyagarbha or Sutratman. When it becomes fully manifest as the world of names and forms it is known as Virat. "The creation may be understood as following a regular order. Hiranyagarbha is known as Sutratman. He is called the subtle body. He is of the nature of the aggregate of all living beings as he bears the sense of 'I' in all of them and has the powers of activity and knowledge. Just as the world immersed in semi-darkness before dawn or after sunset shines imperfectly, so is the universe seen indistinctly in the stage of Hiranyagarbha. Just as a grain or vegetable sprouting in all directions, is very tender, so is the sprout of the universe tender in the stage of Hiranyagarbha. Just as the world shining well by sunlight or a crop which has ripened, so is the Virat who has a clear perceptible body" V.P.VI. 199-203.

The author illustrates the process by reference to the stages in which a picture takes shape on a canvas. A piece of cloth is first bleached, then it is made stiff by smearing starch on it, then drawings are made rather indistinctly with pencil and finally the drawings are made clear pictures by the application of paint. "Just as four stages are observed in the making of a picture on canvas, so four steps must be recognised in the Supreme Self in its becoming the universe. Just as the canvas is well-washed, made stiff, outlines are marked on it and then coloured, so is the Atman, said to be 'Chit' or Pure Consciousness, Antaryami, the inner ruler, Sutratman and Virat. Chit is pure consciousness.



Antaryami has Maya for his adjunct. Sutratman represents the partial manifestation of the universe. Virat is the stage of the full manifestation of the universe" (V.P.VI. 1.2 and 4)

### Chapter III

## PSYCHOLOGY

### 1. The Jiva

So far we have dealt with the metaphysics of Advaita as it is expounded by Vidyananya. We have now to set forth its psychology. Psyche means the soul and a systematic account of its origin, its nature and its final destiny may be called Psychology. Modern Psychology, however, has lost sight of the soul altogether. It does not even deal with the functions of the mind. It occupies itself with studying the external behaviour of man. But we are using the term in its original sense.

The Jiva is a reflection of Pure Intelligence in Avidya which is Prakriti dominated by impure sattva. If rajas and tamas dominate over the sattva constituent of Prakriti, it then becomes impure Avidya. When Pure Intelligence is reflected in Avidya, it ceases to be homogeneous and becomes heterogeneous. It becomes a complex entity made up of an element of the basic intelligence, the subtle body and the reflection of intelligence in the internal organ. "That which is the basic consciousness, that which is the subtle body and the lustre of consciousness cast on the subtle body, a combination of these is the Jiva" (V.P.IV.11). In



'Swatma Prakasika' Sankara says that the jiva is a complex of three entities, basic consciousness, its reflection in the intellect and the subtle body. It is endowed with a psycho-physical vesture and deems itself to be both agent and enjoyer. As a consequence of this false belief it goes through repeated births and deaths. "They (the jivas) do actions for purposes of enjoying. They enjoy for the purpose of doing actions. They go from one birth to another just like a worm that is caught up in a stream passes speedily from one whirlpool to another. They do not get happiness at all". (V.P.I.30)

The jiva is thickly overlaid with five vestures known as kosas. They are the physical body called annamaya kosa, the subtle body comprising the pranamaya, manomaya and vijñana maya kosa, and the causal body made up of the anandamaya kosa. Deluded by these sheaths, the jiva has become oblivious of its real nature. One has to pierce through these five sheaths to get at the real nature of the jiva.

The three bodies mentioned above, the gross, the subtle and the causal are associated with the three states of the jiva, the waking, the dream and the dreamless. Corresponding to the three cosmic forms of Isvara, namely, Isvara, Hiranyagarbha or Sutrātman and Virāt, there are three psychical forms for the jiva, the Prajñā, the Taijasa and the Viswa. When the internal organ is resolved in deep sleep, the witness of bare nescience is Prajñā; when the internal organ has its conceit in the individual subtle body, it is called Taijasa; when the internal organ has its conceit in the gross, physical body in the waking condition it is called Viswa.

The parallelism between the state, the body, the sheath and the psychical form may be set forth as follows :

1. Waking state, physical body, annamaya kosa and viswa.
2. Dream state, subtle body, 

pranamaya  
manomaya and  
vijñana maya

}

kosa and Taijasa
3. Deep sleep, causal body, ananda maya kosa and prajña.

## 2. Jiva and Brahman

The relation between the Jiva and Brahman has been differently conceived by the thinkers who came after Sankara. Pressing the analogies given by Sankara beyond their proper limits they developed sharp differences between themselves and as a consequence fell into two camps which later came to be known as the Bhamati Prasthāna and the Vivarana Prasthāna. The Bhamati School takes its stand on the views expressed by Vachaspati in his commentary on Sankara's bhashya known as Bhamati. Vachaspati himself follows the lead of Mandana Misra, a senior contemporary of Sankara. The views of the Bhamati school are therefore ultimately traceable to the 'Brahmasiddhi' of Mandana Misra. The Vivarana School takes its stand on the views expressed by Padmapada, a direct disciple of Sankara, in the fragment of his commentary on Sankara's bhashya known as Panchapadika. These views are more clearly stated and given a sharp point by



Prakasatman in his gloss on the Panchapadika called Panchapadika Vivarana. Vidyaranya strongly defends these views against criticism in his book known as 'Vivarana Prameya Sangraha'. Padmapada himself is indebted for his views not a little to Sureswara.

The Bhamati view of the relation of the jiva to Brahman may be stated as 'the process of the finitising of the Infinite'. When Brahman is delimited by the internal organ, it becomes the jiva. This is known as 'Avacceda Vada' or limitation theory. Just as unlimited space appears as so many limited spaces owing to artificial adjuncts (upadhis) even so Brahman appears as so many jivas when it is delimited by so many internal organs. When a pot, for example, which delimits space, is produced or destroyed, the space delimited by it is not produced or destroyed. When the pot is carried to a different place, the space contained in it is not also carried to a different place. When the pot is destroyed, the space delimited by it merges in unlimited space. Even so when the limitations of time, space and causality are removed, the jivas become one with the Infinite Brahman. When the defining limits are got rid of, there is no longer any difference between the jiva and Brahman.

Sankara has given this analogy in many contexts. Commenting on Vedanta Sutra I. iii. 7 he writes :

यस्तु, सर्वं शरीरेषु, उपाधिभिर्विता उपलभ्येत परएव स भवति ।  
यथा घटादिच्छिद्राणि मठाधिभिर्विता उपलक्ष्यमाणानि महाकाश  
एव भवति ।

In his minor poem known as 'Atmabodha' (10) he writes :

यथाकाशो हृषीकेशो नानोपाधि गतोविभुः ।  
तद्भेदाद्भिन्नवद्भाति तन्नाशे केवलो भवेत् ॥

In spite of the support this view enjoys from the writings of Sankara, it comes in for very sharp criticism at the hands of Vidyaranya. He writes "The unattached Brahman cannot at all become a jiva merely because of a limitation. If it could become a jiva by a limitation, the status of a jiva must be ascribed to it when it is limited by the pot or the wall" (V.P. VIII 28). The point of the criticism is that what can act as a limit can only be inert matter. The bare intellect is a product of Prakriti and, therefore, bare matter. If the inner organ, which is subtle matter, can transform Brahman into a jiva, the pot or the wall must also be credited with the power to transform Brahman into a jiva. This is absurd. It is only when the inner organ is illumined by intelligence that it can transform Brahman into a jiva. In that case the internal organ does not operate as a limitation. It only serves to reflect the Brahman-intelligence and this reflection is what we call jiva.

There is also another objection to the limitation theory. This is based on ethical grounds. When a jiva goes to Heaven by virtue of its meritorious deeds, the intelligence limited by the internal organ that goes to Heaven cannot be the same as the one which acquired merit on earth. We cannot attribute motion to what is all-pervading. If a different intelligence



goes to Heaven, then it will have to suffer for evil deeds which it has not done or fail to get the reward for the good deeds that it has done while it was on earth. This will mean अकृत अभ्यागम and कृत नाश. This objection is stated by Sankara in his commentary on Vedanta Sutra II. iii. 49.

The reflection theory is sponsored by Prakasatman in his Panchapadika Vivarana and it is endorsed by Vidyanaraya in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha. According to this theory the jiva is a reflection of Brahman in the medium of the internal organ. In the Panchapadika Vivarana this theory is explained as follows: The jiva is a reflection of Intelligence in the internal organ. Since there is no difference between the prototype and the reflection, the jiva is non-different from Brahman. The reflected face in the mirror is not other than its prototype. It is in fact identical with the original face.

Like the reflection of the sun and moon in water, the individual souls are reflections in avidya of the one Reality. When the water gets dried up, sun and moon remain the heavens, only the reflections disappear. Even so on the abolition of avidya, the reflections will cease to exist and only the real will remain. The Absolute is the original (bimba) and the jivas are the reflections (prati bimba). The Absolute which is without a second appears as different individual souls through reflection in different internal organs. According to this view, the internal organ is not so much a limiting adjunct as a reflecting medium. It is not a necessary adjunct as the limitation theory implies but only an unessential, adventitious adjunct which receives the

reflection of the original Intelligence. It does not belong to the jiva as part of its composition.

This view also enjoys the support of Sankara. Commenting on Vedanta Sutra II. iii. 50 he writes: आभास एव एष जीवः परस्यात्मतो जल सूर्यकादिवत् प्रतिपत्तव्यः । Commenting on the Agama Prakarana of the Mandukya Karika (6) he writes: अतः सर्वं जनयति प्राणः चेतो अंशून् अंशव इव रवेश्चिदात्मकस्य पुरुषस्य चेतो रूपा जलार्क समाः प्राज्ञ तैजस विश्व भेदेन देव मनुष्य तिर्यगादि देह भेदेषु, विभाव्यमानाः चेतो अंशवो ये etc.

But this view is also open to objection. A thing devoid of form cannot cast any reflection; much less can it do so in a reflector which is equally formless. But this is no objection, says Vidyanaraya. The reflection of even the formless is possible just like the non-material ether, together with the stars and clouds, is reflected in water. Of Pure Brahman, however, there can be no reflection, but there can be a reflection of Brahman qualified by Maya.

The author of the Panchapadika Vivarana seeks to get over the difficulty mentioned above by making out that the rays proceeding from the eyes are obstructed by the reflector, namely, the mind. They then turn back and make the actual face perceptible. The reflection is thus the original itself. But Vidyanaraya does not endorse this rather ingenious explanation.

Vidyanaraya's own theory is known Abhasa Vada. "Slightly shining in Abhasa". The reflected image is of the same kind, without possessing all the charac-



teristics of the original ; yet it shines like the original" V.P. VIII. 32. The Abhasa is an illusory product. It resembles the original in a feeble manner since it has the quality of shining like Pure Intelligence. But the Abhasa is changeful and attached while Pure Intelligence is unchanging and unattached. He seeks to make this view plausible by likening it to the ether with stars and clouds reflected in the water in a pot. But even so, the theory is not quite convincing.

After a careful consideration of Vidyaranya's views on this question as he has stated them in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha, Drg-Drsyo Viveka and Vedanta Panchadasi one is inclined to think that he is drifting, though, by imperceptible degrees, towards the avacceda vada of Vachaspati. This becomes increasingly clear from his interpretation of the Mahavakya. 'Tat Tvam Asi'. According to his interpretation what this text declares is the non-difference between Brahman and the Jiva defined by the internal organ and not the illusory "Abhasa".

Those who reject all these theories declare that the jiva is the unchanging Brahman, ignorant of its real nature. Sankara is inclined to this view. So also Sureswara. Sankara makes this clear in his commentary on Brihadaranyaka II. i. 20. where he narrates the story of the prince who, having fallen into low company, had forgotten his royal descent and who realised it as soon as he was reminded of it. "Personal consciousness", as Dr. Radhakrishnan puts it, "is an inexplicable presentation of Brahman. The jiva appears but we do not know how".

### 3. Eka Jiva Vada versus Aneka Jiva Vada

Some hold that there is only one jiva and one material body. The other bodies and finite souls are like those seen in a dream. They lack personal consciousness. Others hold that there is only one jiva ; he is Hiranyagarbha and he is the reflection of Brahman. The other jivas are only semblances of Hiranyagarbha. But these thinkers admit that there are many material bodies, each provided with an unreal jiva. A third view holds that there is only one jiva which resides in each of the many bodies by means of its powers (saktis).

These views are not acceptable to Sankara. They border on solipsism of an extreme type. Just as Buddhist Vijnana Vada reduces the objective world to an idea in the mind of the seer, even so the views mentioned above reduce other jivas and other material bodies to the level of dream perceptions. It is a matter of common experience that the lion or the tiger that we perceive in a dream is either the creation of the perception or its creation is simultaneous with the perception thereof. Prakasananda, in his book called Vedanta Siddhanta Muktaavali, has tried to justify this view known as Drsti Srsti Vada, but His defence has failed to carry conviction. Sankara's criticism of Vijnana Vada is well-known.

The author of the Panchapadika Vivarana is believed to have advocated the theory of one jiva and Vidyaranya in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha tries to defend this view. He mentions that in the sight of each person he alone is the self and all others are mere illusory



presentations of avidya. This view of Vidyananda borders on solipsism. But his solipsism is more apparent than real. A closer study will show that from the phenomenal point of view he recognises many jivas though from the transcendental point of view there is but one reality, Brahman, who is both the locus and the content of avidya. He seems to be bound as it were and released as it were. In reality there is none bound, none striving for release and none released.

This is from the highest point of view. From a lower point of view, however, he admits the reality of many jivas which are reflections of Pure Intelligence. "For the man shown in the picture seeming cloths are separately provided. They are notionally created resemblances of cloth which is the background of the picture. As regards the embodied beings imposed on Pure consciousness, seeming consciousness is provided separately for them in the name of jivas (individual souls) and those wander about in various ways" (V.P. VI 7-8-). It is to distinguish these jivas from inert things that they are drawn on the canvas with apparent cloths.

Following the lead of Mandana Misra, Vachaspati believes in many finite souls. His reason for holding this view is that when one jiva is released, all the others are not released. The jiva which acquires knowledge is released and not the others. Knowledge can remove the ignorance of only that person who has acquired it and not the ignorance of the others also. His knowledge must relate to that object of which he was ignorant before. Knowledge relating to one thing cannot remove the ignorance relating to a wholly

different thing. This knowledge must arise in the person who is ignorant and it must relate to the particular object of which he was ignorant before. It is clear therefore, that each Jiva must acquire the saving knowledge purely by its own efforts and the knowledge that it acquires must relate to the notion of the Jiva. Otherwise the false notion that the Jiva has of itself will not be dispelled. The final intuition has, therefore, the Jiva for its locus and again the nature of the Jiva for its content. Thus the Jiva becomes both the subject and the object of the final psychosis (carama vritti). This is Vachaspati's view and it enjoys the support of Sankara. This is also the view of Vidyananda. He is not, therefore, a wholesale supporter of the Vivarana view. He exercises his discretion and adopts the view which is most reasonable. He tries to bridge the gulf between the two opposing camps as far as possible.

#### 4. The Witness Self

Rid of its appurtenances, the Jiva is the self-luminous Intelligence which reveals all the changing modes of the mind, itself standing aloof like a disinterested witness. This witness-self continues to shine in all the three states, the waking, the dream and dreamless sleep. During the waking state it reveals the perceptions arising from the contact of the mind with the objects through the sense-organs. During the state of dreaming it illumines the perceptions of that state though all sources of external light are shut out. In deep sleep it shows that there are no perceptions. Thus it illumines both the presence and absence of perceptions. While it illumines all the states and all



the modes of the mind, it itself stands in no need of any other light to reveal it, since it is self-luminous. Vidyaranya gives the example of the light that is set on the stage which illumines the manager of the show, the actors and the audience. It continues to shine even when the stage is emptied of all people. It then shows that there is nothing on the stage. "The lamp placed in a dancing hall illumines the master, the assembled persons and the dancing girl without any difference. It will shine even if there is nobody. Similarly the witness illumines the 'I sense', the mind and also the objects. Even in the absence of the 'I sense' it will continue to shine as before" (V.P.X. 11-12)

Their witness-self is the Kutastha which was likened to the ether delimited by the pot in V. P. VI. 22. In a previous chapter we have made a reference to this point. We have said also that the Jiva ultimately merges in the Kutastha. Since the Kutastha is the substrate, the foundational intelligence, which underlies the two bodies, the gross and the subtle, it is but natural that the witness-self should merge in it. It is not even a question of merging as realising. The witness-self comes to the realisation that is non-different from the Kutastha. This realisation will ultimately result in the realisation that the witness-self is non-different from the Highest Brahman. Vidyaranya explains the stages by which this realisation comes about; when it disengages itself from its vestures, the witness-self realises that the 'I notion' which stands for the Cidabhasa is a superimposition on the Kutastha. Rid of its 'I-ness', the witness-self is non-different from the Kutastha. Then comes the realisation that there is little

difference between the Kutastha and Brahman. Hence the light which illumines both the presence and the absence of knowledge in the mind is none other than Brahman-Intelligence itself. All the Vedanta texts proclaim this great truth in one voice. It is the light which never goes out. It is not contradicted or sublated by any other experience. Vidyaranya makes all this quite clear in the chapter entitled 'Kutastha Deepa', especially in stanzas 47-49, 56 and 66.



## Chapter IV

### MAYA

The concept of Maya occupies a very important place in the philosophy of Advaita. In fact, it may be regarded as the key-stone of the advaitic edifice. If this is pulled down, the whole building will collapse like a house of cards. Critics of advaita, therefore, concentrate their attack on this concept. They feel that if this conception is proved to be untenable, the demolition of the other doctrines of the system, such as Nirguna Brahman, the identity of the Jiva with Brahman and the unreality of the universe will automatically follow. It is well known that Ramanuja spent all his powder and shot in attacking this concept and drew up a formidable list of objections. They look unanswerable but on closer examination they will disappear like mist before the rising sun.

Maya is not a concept that Sankara has imported from Buddhism. It is germane to his system and to the line of thought developed in the Upanishads. We have mentioned this fact in the introductory chapter. If it is admitted that ultimate reality is strictly one without a second, then we are under a logical obligation to admit also the concept of Maya for we cannot otherwise account for the appearance of the world of diversity and the plurality of finite selves. As Paul Deussen has observed in his 'Philosophy of the Upani-

shads', the concept of Maya is the inevitable logical complement of the metaphysical doctrine of the oneness of ultimate reality. The term 'Maya' itself occurs in the Upanishads and it is remarkable that it is used almost exactly in the sense in which Sankara employs it in his system. Avidya, its equivalent, occurs quite frequently in the Upanishads. Advaita Vedanta which claims to be the logical development of the thought of the Upanishads, has naturally given an important place to the concept of Maya.

Some advaitic thinkers make a distinction between Maya and Avidya. Maya, they say, is one and collective while Avidya is multiple and distributive. Maya is the adjunct of Isvara while Avidya is the adjunct of Jiva. Maya is Prakriti in which pure sattva is predominant while Avidya is Prakriti in which impure sattva predominates. Maya has only the power to project what is unreal while Avidya has the power to project as well as to conceal and delude the finite selves. Vidyaranya refers to these distinctions: "The two kinds are called Maya and Avidya by reason respectively of the purity and impurity of the quality of Sattva. The Self reflected in Maya is Isvara and He has entire control over it. He is the Lord, the omniscient. The other, the Jiva, however is in the grip of Avidya and on account of its variedness, is of various sorts" (V.P.I. 16-17).

But these differences cannot be pressed too far. In essence Maya and Avidya are the same. Hence in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha, Vidyaranya gives a definition equally applicable to both. "Maya or Avidya



is the power which obstructs the presentation of the real and which is responsible for the presentation of what is unreal. It is indeterminable in nature". अनिर्वचनीयत्वे सति तत्वाभास प्रतिबन्ध विपर्यावभासयोः हेतुत्वं लक्षणं तच्चोभयोः अविशिष्टम् । It is stated in this definition that both Maya and Avidya have the common characteristic of concealing the real and projecting the unreal and that both are indeterminable in nature. Neither Maya nor Avidya could be characterised as either real or as unreal. Both have a relative existence and both are ultimately unreal. That which is not यामा is Maya माया. Vidyaranya illustrates its unreal character by referring to the story which the nurse narrated to the children. "For the entertainment of a boy, the nurse tells an interesting story : 'Oh boy, somewhere there were three handsome princes. Of them two were not born and the third did not exist even in the womb. Invested with virtues, they lived in a town which did not exist at all' (V. P. XIII. 22. 23)".

From this account we should not conclude that Maya or Avidya is mere absence of knowledge. They are not mere negative entities. Rather they are positive for every individual has the positive experience of his own ignorance, अहं अज्ञः । Since this is an experience it must have a positive character. Only what is positive and existent can become an object of experience and not what is negative and non-existent. There can be no contact whether through the sense-organs or through the mind, with what is non-existent. It follows that if Maya or Avidya were merely absence of knowledge, we could have no experience of either. But we do

have the experience of our ignorance. Hence it must be treated as a positive entity.

Now arises the question regarding the locus of Maya. Wherefrom does it operate ? Two answers are given and they represent the views of the Bhamati and the Vivarana school of thought. Vacaspati, following the lead of Mandana Misra, asserts that the Jiva is the locus of Avidya. His reason is that it is dispelled by the knowledge which the individual self acquires. If it were located elsewhere, say in Brahman, then it could not be demolished by the knowledge which the finite self acquires. The ignorance of one cannot be destroyed by the knowledge which some other person requires. Unless ignorance belongs to the man who acquires the knowledge, it cannot be removed by such knowledge. We find that a particular Jiva acquires the saving knowledge and that Jiva is liberated. Vacaspati recognises a plurality of Avidyas and necessarily a plurality of Jivas as their resting places. It is open to each individual to get rid of his Avidya by the acquisition of the knowledge of his own real nature and get released. Ordinary ignorance may be removed by acquiring the knowledge of the object to which it relates, but this primeval ignorance can be dispelled only by the knowledge of Brahman or Atman. Realising one's own true nature also comes to the same thing.

To this view it is possible to raise the objection of reciprocal dependence. It may be asked how the Jiva which is the product of Avidya can itself be the seat of Avidya. There was no Jiva before the operation of Avidya. It came into existence only after Avidya



had screened the real and projected the unreal. How can that which owns its origin to avidya be itself the locus of Avidya ?

This is no doubt a very powerful objection and Ramanuja has given it the first place in his list of objections. But it will not stand examination. It presupposes the existence of time. The question which is earlier and which is later is meaningful only in relation to time. But Avidya did not come into existence at any particular point of time. It is beginningless, Anadi. The Jiva also is equally Anadi. Vacaspati does not say that at any particular point of time there was only Avidya and the Jiva did not exist nor does he say that at any time there was only the Jiva and Avidya did not exist. His view is that both are coeval. Both are beginningless and it is as meaningless to ask which came first and which came later as it is to ask whether the seed came first or the tree.

The Vivarana view is that Brahman is the locus of Maya. Since the only reality admitted in the system is Brahman, it logically follows that it must be the seat of Maya. This is the view of Sureswara and, as we have already stated, the Vivarana follows his lead in this as in many other respects. The Vivarana maintains that there is no contradiction involved here. There is nothing wrong in recognising that Maya, which is ignorance, has its locus in Brahman which is Pure Sentience. Maya can co-exist with Suddha Chaitanya ; what cannot do so is Vritti-Chaitanya. We are to understand that Brahman is bound as it were by its own ignorance and liberated as it were by its own

knowledge. This view, however, places too great a strain on our sense of probability. It is rather difficult to believe that both bondage and liberation belong to Brahman. The 'as it were' does not remove the difficulty. Even in the case of the finite self the bondage and the release are only 'as it were' from the correct point of view. The liberated individual, in the fullness of his knowledge, will only say that he was never bound and never set free. Both become unreal in the wake of the plenary experience. There is, however, some meaning in saying that the finite self feels bound at one time and liberated at another time but none in saying that Brahman feels bound at one time and liberated at another time.

Vidyaranya strikes a middle course in regard to this question. He appreciates the reasoning in both positions. But his sympathies are with the view of Vachaspati. It enjoys the support of Sankara also. In his commentary on Vedanta Sutra IV. 1. 15 he asserts that no one has the right to question the experience of an individual who feels that he is liberated, merely because he still continues in the embodied condition. Since he speaks of the individual's experience we have to infer that the finite self was the locus of ignorance. Vidyaranya's leanings are towards the Bhamati view though he recognises the force in the reasoning of the Vivarana view.

Maya can be studied from three stand-points. To the man in the street the world is perfectly real. He never suspects that it is unreal or that it is the projection of Maya. Hence he is not worried by this



problem at all. To those who are well-versed in the sastras, Maya is a non-entity, a mere figment of the imagination. In sastraic parlance it is spoken of a 'tucca'. They dismiss it as wholly unreal and never worry about it. To the philosopher who brings an intellectual approach to the question, it becomes a problem. He finds it difficult to admit it as real; he finds it equally difficult to dismiss it as unreal. Hence he treats its nature as something indeterminable. He speaks of it as 'sadasad vilakshana'.

Which-ever is its seat, Maya cannot wholly conceal the reality. If it did so, it would itself become invisible. Maya has no power to reveal itself, being insentient. If it is known at all, it is because of the light of the Brahman. The cloud seeks to hide the sun, but does it succeed? No. If it did, it would itself become invisible. If the sun were completely hidden there would be nothing but darkness and in that darkness nothing could be seen. We will not then be in a position to say that the cloud is hiding the sun. The cloud is such a small thing and how can it hide the sun whose size is so great? Even so, Maya can never wholly conceal the Brahman. It can do so only partially. Like the cloud hiding the sun from our view, Maya also can conceal Brahman only to our limited vision.

## Chapter V

### LOGIC AND THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

The Ista Siddhi of Vimuktaatman and the Vedanta Paribhasha of Dharmaraja focus attention on the Epistemology of Advaita Vedanta. But the works of Vidya-ranya pay more attention to the metaphysics of Advaita than to its Logic and theory of knowledge. Hence we cannot look for a systematic treatment of the Pramanas and allied topics in the Panchadasi or Vivarana Prameya Sangraha. There are, however, occasional references to them arising from the discussion of metaphysical doctrines and these we may bring together in this chapter.

A Pramana is a means of valid knowledge. We get to know the real nature of things only by applying the proper means. These are classified as six : Perception (Pratyaksha), Inference (Anumana), Analogical reasoning (Upamaana), Verbal Testimony (Sabda), Presumptive reasoning (Arthaapatti) and non-cognition (Anupalabdi). Advaita Vedanta agrees with the Mimamsa in admitting the validity of these six pramanas. All of them are means of valid knowledge.

#### 1. Pratyaksha

Of these six, perception comes first. It is the earliest source of valid knowledge to us. It arises from the contact of the sense-organ with corresponding objects



in the external world. The sense-organs are five, the ear, the skin, the eye, the tongue and the nose. The senses are faculties of perception set in particular parts of the body. The physical appendages attached to those faculties merely serve as aids. They are not to be treated as sense-organs proper.

The natural tendency of these faculties is to flow out and not to look within. The ear grasps sound, the skin apprehends the changes in the weather, the eye perceives colour, the tongue apprehends taste and the nose apprehends smell. These sense-organs receive impressions from their contact with objects and these impressions are transmitted to the mind where they are worked up into knowledge. The intellect (buddhi) decides on the nature of the action that will suit the occasion. The action that is decided on is left to be carried out by the motor organs (Karmendriyas) which are also five in number.

From this account it is clear that the mind is not a passive entity which simply receives knowledge even as a vessel receives the water that is poured into it. Rather the mind plays an active part in giving rise to knowledge. It is spoken of as the Lord of the sense-organs. This means that the mind dominates them. It is stated in the Upanishad that if the mind does not actively co-operate with the sense-organs, one may have his eyes wide open and yet see nothing, one may have his ears wide open and yet hear nothing.

This raises the question whether the mind is to be treated as a sense-organ on a par with the other

five or to be treated as a different faculty. Vachaspati thinks that the mind is the inner sense-organ, the other five being outer sense-organs. The mind may therefore be treated as the sixth sense-organ (shashtendriya). This inner sense-organ makes us directly and immediately aware of our feelings and emotions such as pleasure and pain, happiness and misery. Just as the five outer sense-organs give us direct and immediate knowledge of the objects and events in the external world, even so the mind gives us direct and immediate knowledge of the inner states such as pleasure and pain. It is therefore, the instrument (karana) of inner perception. Sankara says that though the 'Sruti' is not in favour of treating the mind as a sense-organ, the Smritis lend support to that view. Vachaspati takes this as lending support to his view.

But the author of the Vivarana thinks that the mind is not a sense-organ but a different faculty. He thinks that happiness and misery are made known by the witness self and not by the mind. They are केवल साक्षि भास्य . Though Vidyaranya defends this view in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha, he modifies his view in the Panchadasi. In II. 12 he speaks of the mind as the inner instrument. Further he recommends mental concentration (dhyana) as an aid to Brahman—realisation. "Thus the Veda and the Smriti prescribe concentration of mind (dhyana) on the Self for the eradication of the wrong conception", (VII 109). "He who is unable to make the enquiry either because of the great dullness of his intellect or because of the want of necessary means must contemplate Brahman incessantly" (IX 54). Dhyana and upasana are activities of the mind. It must



therefore be treated as an instrument (karana) like the outer senses. This is another instance to show that Vidyaranya does not identify himself with the Vivarana view as a matter of course. He uses his discretion.

We have now to describe the process by which perceptual knowledge arises. Ordinarily we think that two factors are involved in giving rise to perceptual knowledge, the cogniser and the cognised or the subject and the object. The subject is the knower and the object is the known. Vidyaranya adds two more. The four factors involved in perception are: 1) the intelligence which has the internal organ as its adjunct, 2) the intelligence qualified by the psychosis together with the reflection of intelligence, 3) the intelligence defined by the object, eg., the pot and 4) the reflection of intelligence which is generated by the contact of the cognitive psychosis with the object. The first factor is known as the perceiving agent or Pramata; the second as the cognitive psychosis or the means of valid knowledge (Pramana, the third is known as the cognised object or Visaya Chaitanya and the last is known as the fruit intelligence (Phala chaitanya). In Panchadasi VIII. 4-17, Vidyaranya has mentioned these four factors involved in perception. His theory that the Jiva in an illusory presentation (Chidabhasa) has made it necessary for him to formulate these four steps in the perceptive process.

Due to the impulsion of previous merit and demerit, the internal organ which is a transformation of Pure Intelligence due to nescience, goes out through the sense-organs, reaches the object, pervades it and assumes

its form. It is like water going out from a tank through the small canals, entering the field and assuming its form. Or, it is like molten metal taking the form of the mould into which it is poured. Or, it may be compared to sunlight assuming the form of the object which it illumines. By such pervasion the cogniser and the cognised are identified with each other. All this is clearly set forth in V.P.IV. 28-30.

It has been said above that the internal organ in the form of the cognitive psychosis connects the cogniser with the cognised. The cogniser is Pure Intelligence which is unattached. How does it get attached to the internal organ which is a modification of nescience? If it could get attached to the internal organ, it may as well get attached to the objects of the world directly without the aid of the internal organ.

To this objection the answer is that the intellect is the product of nescience when sattva predominates in it. Hence it is sufficiently refined to reflect the intelligence of the Self. It is also nearest to the Self. Hence there is a natural affinity between the Self and the internal organ. But the objects of the world are the products of nescience when tamas predominates in it. They are, therefore, inert and cannot reflect the intelligence of the Self. They can shine only when the intelligence that is imbedded in the internal organ falls on them. Hence the Self cannot get into direct contact with the objects. It can do so only through the mediation of the internal organ.

Though pure intelligence is one homogeneous whole, it yet appears as the cogniser, the means of cognition,



the object of cognition and the fruit intelligence owing to its association with the internal organ which is divisible. Space appears to move when the pot which contains it is moved from one place to another. In the Brihadaranyaka (IV iii. 7) it is said : "it thinks as it were, it moves as it were". This apparent thinking and moving is due to the association of the Self with the intellect. That is how Sankara explains it. A similar explanation will make it clear how pure Intelligence which is impartite can yet appear under the above mentioned four forms.

In perceiving an object that is outside, the internal organ has to go out through the sense-organs, reach it, pervade it and assume its form. But in regard to the perception of the mental states like happiness and misery, there is no need for the internal organ to go out. Here the object is not outside but inside the mind. Hence the internal organ has only to assume the form of the mental state and illumine it. This is likened to the heated iron-ball which is a glow but does not shed light on anything else. "The heated iron shows forth only itself and not anything else. Similarly the mental activities accompanied by the reflected self show forth only themselves". (V.P. VIII. 19).

## 2. Inference

The only kind of inference that Vidyaranya employs is the argument from co-presence and co-absence. It is called Anvaya Vyatireki. In the Pancha Mahabhuta Viveka he shows by adopting this line of reasoning that though the five gross elements differ in respect

of their distinctive qualities, all of them have one characteristic in common and that is the fact of bare existence. This quality is uniformly present in all of them. He shows also that in its absence, the elements are reduced to naught. Hence the author concludes that the abiding quality in the elements is the fact of existence. That is their essential truth. The distinctive features of the elements are in the nature of superimposition on bare existence.

In the next chapter called Pancha Kosa Viveka he adopts a similar line of reasoning and shows that what is uniformly present in the five sheaths and actuates them is the self. He reinforces this conclusion by showing that what remains when all of them are transcended is not nothing but the Self.

Vidyaranya undertakes a similar analysis of the three states, waking, dream and dreamless sleep, and demonstrates conclusively that though the content of these states vary, there is one constant entity which illumines all of them without being affected in the least by their vicissitudes. In the waking state both the mind and sense-organs are active. Aided by some extraneous light we acquire knowledge of the external world. But what really illumines the perceptions of the waking state is the light of the inner self. The presence of artificial lights hides this truth from our view. But it becomes clear when we go from the waking to the dream state. In this state the sense-organs cease to function. Hence we lose touch with the external world. This means that we no longer have the aid of external light. And yet we have dream perceptions. These are the creation



of the mind. It is clear that what illumines the perceptions of the dream-state is the light of the inner self. This fact is established beyond a shadow of doubt when we go from dream to dreamless sleep. In that state we perceive nothing. We remember this and exclaim the next morning, 'I slept well, I saw nothing'. Only an experienced fact can be recalled later. That the state of dreamless sleep was a blank must have been perceived then. The light which made this perception possible was surely the light of the witness self. In the fourth state known as 'samadhi' even the nescience that is perceived in deep sleep lapses and what remains is Pure Consciousness. By employing the method of reasoning called anvaya Vyatireki Vidyaranya proves conclusively that what illumines all the states is the light of the witness self.

### 3. Sruti

We may pass over upamaana, arthaapatti and anupalabdi as our author has not made any use of them in his writings.

Of the six pramaanaas, Sruti or Verbal testimony is the most important one, for the central doctrines of Advaita Vedanta derive their support largely from that source alone. That Brahman is attributeless, that the finite soul is non-different from it, that the world of diversity and change is only an apparent presentation, these ultimate truths are too deep for thought. They cannot be comprehended by the human intellect. It is wrong to swear by the intellect and deny the existence of Brahman merely because it cannot be

grasped by the intellect. The human intellect has its well-defined limitations. It can operate only in the region where the subject-object relation prevails. The experiences of sages transcend this region. The truths that have dawned on them in their unself-conscious moods are preserved for us in the Upanishads. This body of knowledge is what we call Sruti. It is our sole authority in regard to transempirical matters.

अतान्द्रियार्थेषु विषयेषु श्रुतिः नः प्रमाणम् ।

This is what Sankara has said.

Though the Mimamsaka also attaches great importance to the authority of the Veda, there is a vital difference between his attitude towards the Veda and that of the Advaitin. The Mimamsaka maintains that only those statements of the Veda are purportful which enjoin some action. The others are either to be dismissed as meaningless or they must be shown to bear some relation to the purportful texts. The Advaitin sharply differs from this view while not denying the value of the texts which enjoin some ritual, he maintains that the really purportful texts are those which call attention to an existing fact. The Mahavakyas come under this head. 'Tat Tvam Asi' (that thou art), 'Aham Brahma Asmi' (I'm indeed Brahman), 'Ayam Atma Brahma' (This Atma is Brahman) and 'Prajnanam Brahma' (Pure Sentience is Brahman), these four are considered to be the most purportful texts since they remind us of an ever-existing, ever-present fact, namely, the identity of the individual soul with Brahman.

That they are the most purportful texts is determined by the application of the six tests. Upakrama-



upasamhara (beginning and end), abhyasa (repetition), apurvata (novelty), phala (fruit), arthavada (glorification) and upapatti (standing to reason.) Sankara has proved by the application of these tests that the uniform purport of all the Upanishads is the identity of the individual self with Brahman. Vidyananda also mentions this in V. P. VII 102.

In regard to the interpretation of these texts we must remember that the direct literal meaning of the words which compose them will not do, as that will not render the texts intelligible. Between 'Tat' (Isvara) and 'Tvam' (thou), for example, there is such difference. Isvara is all-knowing, all powerful and all-pervasive. The Jiva is quite the opposite of these qualities. Hence we can never affirm the identity of the two. And yet the text affirms their identity. To understand their identity we must give up the direct, literal, meaning and go in for the indirect, implied, meaning. This secondary meaning is known as 'lakshyarth'.

Interpretation in terms of the secondary meaning may take three forms: 1) We may wholly abandon the primary meaning of the words and interpret the sentence in terms of their secondary meaning. 'There is a cottage in the Ganga'. This does not mean that the cottage is in the bed of the river but on the banks. 2) We may retain the primary meaning but add something more to it to make it fully intelligible. 'People holding umbrellas are going.' To understand the full meaning of this statement we must add something that is not stated in it. Not only people with umbrellas are going but also those without umbrellas. The latter are

taking cover under the umbrellas of others. 3) Or, finally, we may retain a part of the primary meaning and abandon another part. 'This is that Devadatta'. This is an identity judgment and not an attributive one. It does not state the attributes of Devadatta but affirms the essential identity of the individual. Though he was seen on two different places, at two different times and under two different sets of circumstance, he is still the same person. That is, we abandon the differences in respect of time, place and circumstance as unessential and lay the emphasis on the marks which are essential to him. In spite of the differences, we affirm the identity of the individual. The first method of interpretation is called Jahallakshana, the second ajahallakshana and the third jahadajahallakshana or Bhagatyagalakshana.

The Mahavakya, 'Tat Tvam Asi' has to be interpreted by the third method. Tat and Tvam have many differences. We have already mentioned them. Isvara and Jiva are polar opposites in respect of their qualities. Since the text says that the two are identical, we have to reject these differences as adventitious and look for the quality which is common to both of them. And that common quality is that both are sentient entities. In respect of their sentience there is no difference between them. If this fact is brought to the forefront, the differences will go to the background. With the disappearance of their distinctive qualities, Isvara will cease to be Isvara and the Jiva will cease to be Jiva. Both will merge in Brahman. It is in this deeper sense that the Jiva is identical with Isvara and not in the primary, literal sense. Vidyananda has



discussed this mode of interpreting the Mahavakyas in Vedanta Panchadasi VII 71-78.

Let it not be imagined that the secondary meaning is something wholly different from the primary meaning and that it is imported from without to make the text yield a preconceived meaning. It is something implicit in the primary meaning and therefore suggested by it. In his 'Vakya Vritti' Sankara has defined the secondary meaning as follows :

मानान्तरविरोधे तु मुख्यार्थस्य अपरिग्रहे ।  
मुख्यार्थेना विना भूते प्रतीतिर्लक्षणोच्यते ॥ (47)

Mahavakyas, like ordinary sentences, must have syntactical unity. A sentence is made up of words and unless they stand in a particular relation they cannot yield a consistent meaning. The relation in which they should stand is determined by four conditions. These are expectancy (akanksa), competency (yogyata), close juxtaposition (sannidhi) and intelligibility (tatparya jnana). When a word is uttered it must raise a curiosity in the hearer's mind. The word that is uttered must be such as to make the hearer to expect something more. The next word must be such as to fulfil that expectation. That is, it must cohere with the word already uttered. The third condition necessarily follows from the second. The coherence of the second word with the first can be grasped only if the former is uttered in close succession. Much time must not be allowed to lapse between the utterance of the first word and the second. By the same token, the utterance should not be too rapid either. Rama characterises Hanuman's

speech as अविलम्बितमद्रुतम् . His utterance of words was neither too slow nor too rapid When all the words are taken together they must yield a consistent meaning. Vidyaranya makes mention of these conditions in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha : अन्योन्याकाङ्क्षा सन्निधि योग्यतावन्ति पदानि वाक्यम् ।

The next question is whether the final import of the sentence is grasped simultaneously with the grasping of the meaning of the separate words or later by putting together the meanings of the separate words. The Prabhakaras and the Bhattas are divided in their opinion on this question. The Prabhakara view is that the purport of the sentence is grasped simultaneously with the grasping of the meaning of separate words. According to this view the meaning of the words and the meaning of the sentence as a whole are grasped at the same time. No special effort is necessary to grasp the purport of the sentence. This view is known as anvitaabhidana vada. The Bhatta view is that the words cease to function when they have yielded their meaning. A special effort is, therefore, necessary to know the meaning of the sentence as a whole. The meaning of the words has to be recalled and pieced together. This view is known as abhihitanvaya vada. In his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha Vidyaranya sums up the difference between the two views as follows :

अभिहितान्वयवादे हि पदानि पदार्थानभिधीय उपक्षीयन्ते पदार्थेभ्यो वाक्यार्थप्रतिपत्तिः अन्वीताभिधानवादे तु पदानामेव वाक्यार्थ प्रतिपादकत्वं इति विशेषः ।



Advaitins are divided in their allegiance towards either of these two views. Vachaspati adopts the view of the Bhatta School while the author of the Vivarana holds that both views are acceptable. In his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha Vidyaranya places a new interpretation on the Prabhakara view and makes it acceptable to the advaitin also. According to Prabhakara the verb is the most important word in a sentence as its main function is to enjoin some ritual. All the other words must be directly or indirectly related to the verb. But Vidyaranya shifts the emphasis. The other words need not necessarily be related to the verb as that is not the most important word. They may be related to the substantive or to the adjective. Enjoining some ritual is, not therefore, the main function of a sentence. It may call attention to an existing fact also. Thus he makes out that Prabhakara's view is also acceptable to the advaitin.

The purport of the Mahavakya must be gathered by bringing thought to bear on it after we have heard it from the teacher. After Sravana comes Manana. In his Aparoksanubhuti Sankara says that clear knowledge will not arise except by hard thinking. नोत्पद्यते विना ज्ञानं विचारेणान्यसाधनैः (II). Doubts can be laid to rest only by clear thinking and analysis. Contrary notions which stand in the way of clear understanding can be removed only by the method of Tarka. Tarka is a process of reasoning which begins by accepting the contrary view and then, by drawing out its logical implications, brings out its absurdity at the end. The essence of the Tarka mode of reasoning is to show the inconceivability of the opposite.

Tapas is only another word for hard thinking. Several instances can be cited from the Upanishads to show how the mediate and indirect knowledge gathered by listening to the discourses of the teacher was transformed into immediate and direct experience by tapas, by repeated questioning and by the process of super-imposition and subsequent withdrawal.

"Existence alone, dear one, was this in the beginning, one only without a second". This instruction, given to Svetaketu by his father was mediate and indirect and it became immediate and direct after Svetaketu was told that he himself was that very self. Bhrgu was told by his father that Brahman was the creator and sustainer of the world. This mediate knowledge became an immediate experience by his repeated tapas. Indra went to Prajapati four times to have his doubts cleared about the nature of Brahman. By repeated questionings he obtained clear notions. In the Aitreya Upanishad there is the statement "In the beginning there was only the Self, nothing else existed". This statement gains content and becomes an immediate experience by the process of super-imposition and subsequent denial. Vidyaranya has mentioned these instances in Vivarana Prameya Sangraha VII 61-69.

The logician, however, maintains that a sentence can give only indirect and mediate knowledge. He states his objection in the form of a syllogism :

The Mahavakya can give only mediate knowledge. For it is a sentence, like the sentence 'There is Heaven'. Hence the Mahavakya can give only mediate knowledge.



But this syllogism is vitiated by the fallacy of 'avyapti'. The statement 'there is Heaven' may give only mediate knowledge, but all sentences need not be of that type. The sentence 'thou art the tenth' gives immediate knowledge: Heaven is a distant place and we may not get any direct knowledge about it by merely hearing the sentence, 'there is Heaven'. But that is not the case with the sentence 'thou art the tenth'. Nothing is nearer to us than our self. It is due to ignorance that we think that it is something remote, something uncertain and something other than ourselves. The Mahavakya directly bears on the inmost self in us. And hence after hearing it and after cogitating we get direct and immediate experience.

The logician raises a further objection. He asks whether verbal testimony is real or unreal. If it is real, then Brahman is no longer the one without a second, for there is verbal testimony which is another reality. If it is unreal, how can the knowledge arising from an unreal and, therefore, untrustworthy source, give direct and immediate knowledge? The advaitin's answer is that all Pramanas are ultimately unreal. The Veda itself admits this when it says *अवेदा अवेदा*. But there is nothing to prevent a lower level of experience giving rise to knowledge which belongs to a higher level. A dream is unreal, but the tiger that we see in the dream may bring us to the waking state. *सत्यं प्राप्तस्त्वसत्यादपि भवति* says Sankara in his Sata-sloki (38).

Even after Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana the Mahavakya can give only mediate knowledge and to

get it transformed into an immediate and direct experience a long and sustained course of contemplation, called Prasmkhyana is necessary. This is the view of Vachaspati. In this, as in other respects, he follows the lead of Mandana Misra. But the author of the Panchapadika Vivarana opposes this view. Sureswara also thinks that the Mahavakya, when once it is properly heard and understood, can give rise to direct and immediate experience without the aid of any extraneous agency like Prasmkhyana. Vidyaranya also takes the same view. He gives the instance of the tenth man who, on being told that he was the tenth, realised the truth, free from any trace of doubt. If the object referred to is something outside of us, then it may be true to say that the sentence relating to it can give only indirect knowledge. But the object referred to in the Mahavakya is nothing outside of us. On the other hand, it is our inmost self. Nothing can be nearer than the self in us. Hence there is nothing to prevent direct and immediate experience arising from the hearing of the Mahavakya. This view, that Aparoksha Jnana can arise from the mere hearing of the Mahavakya is known as SABDAPAROKSHA. This is one of the points of difference between the Bhamati Prasthanana and the Vivarana Prasthanana.

In so far as Vidyaranya insists on hard thinking and the removal of contrary notions by employing the method of tarka, he may be said to strike a middle course. He says that no cause will produce its proper effect if there are obstructions in the way. The rule applies to the hearing of the Mahavakya as well. One may hear it any number of times and yet the direct



experience may not result. This failure must be attributed to the presence of counteracting circumstances. To remove them the proper antidote must be employed. Vachaspati and others of his way of thinking recommend Prasamkhyana as the antidote. Vidyaranya prescribes hard thinking and reasoning by the method of tarka. The difference between the two prescriptions is more verbal than material. In this, as in the other cases of difference, Vidyaranya strikes a middle course. His object is not to accentuate the differences but to reduce them as far as possible. The middle course that he adopts amounts to the throwing of a bridge across the gulf.

In regard to transempirical matters, Sruti is our final authority. It derives its authoritativeness from its flawlessness and complete freedom from the shortcomings that are incident to the findings of human reason. Sruti is the collective name given to the eternal verities that dawned in the minds of the purified sages of yore. But it need not be accepted as dogmatic truth. Though we may accept it on trust in the initial stages, we need not always take it on trust. That it stands to reason will become clear to us in course of time. And then there will come a time when its truth will be realised in our own experience.

It over-rides perception in supersensuous matters. Perception says that there is difference but Sruti is emphatic that there is no difference whatsoever. The two statements are exact contradictories and hence both cannot be true. One of them must be rejected

as false. Since this is a matter relating to the nature of ultimate reality, Sruti must prevail and perception must go down. The knowledge that Brahman is one without a second cannot arise except by sublating the perceptual notion that the world is full of difference. We say first 'This is a snake'; we say later 'this is a rope'. The second notion cannot arise except by sublating the first notion. Perception may come first but that is no reason for treating it as superior to Sruti. In fact, that it comes first may itself be sufficient ground for rejecting it. This is known as '*apacceda nyaya*'. It means that the earlier notion must be rejected in favour of the later notion, especially when the latter cannot arise without sublating the former one.

But in regard to matters which are purely empirical perception is our authority and Sruti has nothing to say here. Even a hundred Sruti texts, as Sankara says, cannot make us believe that fire is cold or that it does not evolve heat and light. Vachaspati has said that perception must yield not to any and every vedic statement but only to purportful Sruti.

---



## Chapter VI

### TRUTH AND ERROR

According to Advaita vedanta the criterion of truth is not correspondence or coherence or practical utility but non-contradiction. That judgment is true which remains uncontradicted at all times and in all the levels of experience. By contrast, that judgment is false which suffers contradiction at the same level or at a higher level. Since levels of experience are admitted in the system it necessarily recognises degrees of truth. What we perceive in a dream or in an illusion is true so long as we continue to dream or continue to cherish the illusion. Similarly what we perceive in the state of waking is true so long as we continue in the waking state. Just as we do not suspect the truth of dream perceptions and illusory perceptions as long as we continue to remain in those states even so we do not suspect the truth of our waking perceptions as long as we continue in that state. Just as the illusory perception vanishes and becomes false when light is brought even so our dream perceptions vanish and become false when we come to the waking state. By the same token, our waking perceptions also vanish and become false when we rise to a higher level of experience. This higher level of experience relates to Brahman realisation. It is called the Paramartika level as distinct from the two previous ones known as the

Vyavaharika and the Pratibhasika. Just as the Vyavaharika perceptions belong to a level which is higher than the level to which the Pratibhasika perceptions belong, even so the Paramartika perceptions belong to a level which is higher than the one to which the Vyavaharika perceptions belong. Just as the Pratibhasika perceptions are taken to be true so long as we continue in that state, even so the Vyavaharika perceptions are taken to be true so long as we continue to remain in that state. Just as Pratibhasika perceptions are contradicted by the perceptions of the Vyavaharika state, even so the perceptions of the Vyavaharika state are contradicted by the perceptions of the Paramartika state. Since there is no level of experience higher than the Paramartika state, the perceptions of that level remain uncontradicted. They are therefore the highest truths. The perceptions of the two previous levels are not dismissed as absolutely false but assigned a lower degree of truth. Thus Advaita recognises degrees of truth. The world that we see in the waking state is true for all practical purposes; it becomes false only when we rise to the state of Brahman-realisation. It is in this sense that it is called Mithya. Mithya is not what is absolutely false or unreal but what is perfectly true and real at one level and untrue and unreal at a higher level. According to Advaita nothing that is perceived even for a brief moment by just one individual can be dismissed as absolutely false. Even the mirage, Sankara says, is not without a basis of reality. न हि मृगवृष्णादयोऽपि निरास्पदा भवन्ति । Only words which have no objects corresponding to them, like 'the sky-lotus', 'the barren woman's son' are dismissed as absolutely untrue, as Tucca.



Illusions like the rope-serpent and dream objects like the lion seen in it are perceived for a brief moment by just one individual. They are not perceived even by the same individual at a later time. By contrast, the objects of the waking state, for example, the rope, are perceived by the same individual at different times. They are also perceived as such and such by different individuals at the same time. It follows that such perceptions belong to a level that is higher than the previous one. Hence arises the difference in degree. But, as we have already stated, even the world which is the same to the same individual at different times and the same to different individuals at the same time suffers contradiction when we rise to the highest level of experience, brahma-saksatkara. Hence it must be dismissed as false even as we dismiss the dream perceptions as false when we rise to the waking state. In his Aparokshanubhuti (56) Sankara writes :

अनुभूतोऽप्ययं लोको व्यवहारक्षमोऽपि सन् ।  
असद्रूपो यथा स्वप्न उत्तरक्षणवाधतः ॥

Again in his Atma Bodha (7) we read :

तावत्सत्यं जगद्भाति शुक्तिकारजतं यथा ।  
यावन्न ज्ञायते ब्रह्म सर्वाधिष्ठानमद्वयम् ॥

So far we have elucidated non-contradiction as the criterion of truth. Sometimes another criterion, novelty, is mentioned. But that is not very important. It is laid down to prevent the possibility of what we recall from memory also being treated as true. This condition has only a negative value. It can shut out certain

kinds of knowledge as not fit to be treated as true but it cannot determine what is true.

The next question is whether truth or validity is established by a process different from the one which gives rise to knowledge or whether it is established along with the rise of knowledge. In other words, the question is whether validity is intrinsic or extrinsic; swatah-pramanya or Paratah-Pramanya. The Naiyayikas believe that both the validity and the invalidity of a judgement are determined by the application of factors which are other than those which give rise to it. This is what is called Paratah-Pramanya Vada. The Sankhyas believe that both the validity and the invalidity of a judgement are determined by the very factors which give rise to it. This view is known as 'swatah Pramanya Vada.' The buddhists believe that every judgement is intrinsically invalid and its validity has to be established by resort to extraneous considerations. The Mimamsakas hotly discuss this question and come to the conclusion that every judgement is intrinsically valid unless there are counteracting circumstances which render it invalid. Normal functioning of sense-organs and the activity of the mind are the factors which give rise to the perceptual judgement. These very factors ensure the validity of that judgement. But if our vision is not normal or if the mind is not sufficiently active, the resulting judgement may prove to be invalid. Hence validity is intrinsic while invalidity is extrinsic. This is the Advaitic view also. Like the Mimamsakas the Advaitins also believe that knowledge, as it rises, carries its own validity with it. If there is no flaw in the factors which give rise to knowledge,



there can be no flaw in the resulting judgement. If, however, there is any flaw either in the sense-organ or in the internal organ which goes out to meet the object and assume its form, the resulting judgement is bound to be invalid. Such invalid judgements naturally suffer contradiction. In his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha Vidyananda states the advaitic view as follows :

प्रामाण्यस्य उत्पत्तौ ज्ञप्तौच ज्ञानोत्पादक ज्ञापकानिरिक्त अनपेक्षन्त्व  
लक्षणं स्वस्त्वं । यावत् स्वाश्रय ग्राहक ग्राह्यत्वं स्वतो ग्राह्यत्वम् ।

The root cause of error is ignorance. Due to non-discrimination between what is real and what is unreal we superimpose the real and its attributes on what is unreal and vice versa. This is the essence of error as Sankara has shown in his celebrated introduction to his commentary on the Vedanta Sutra. The process by which error arises is explained more in detail by Vidyananda in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha. First there is the sense contact with what is in front of us, say, nacre. Since there is some flaw in the sense-organ which apprehends it, the psychosis of the internal organ generated by it has 'this' alone for its content. It misses the specific content of the 'this'. Then arises the psychosis of nescience which, aided by past impressions, apprehends the silver which is not there. Though there are two cognitions, they get mixed up since their locus is the same. They consequently appear as one and we exclaim 'this is silver'. In Vedanta Panchadasi (VIII 52) also Vidyananda makes a brief reference to the process by which error arises.

## Chapter VII

### ETHICS AND RELIGION

We have already stated that in Vidyananda's writings the main emphasis is on metaphysics and not on logic or ethics. Just as we have to gather his views on logic and theory knowledge from the stray hints found in different places, even so we have to form some idea of the sadhana that he considered necessary for Brahman-realisation from casual remarks that he has made in several contexts. His Jivan Mukti Viveka is a little more helpful than his other works in this respect. But even in this work he is more concerned with absolute renunciation, Sannyasa, than with the initial steps that lead up to it.

There is no mention anywhere of the elementary virtues, sadharana dharma, like truth-speaking, non-violence, non-covetousness, purity of mind and body and the rest. Patanjali has listed ten elementary virtues under the first two steps of his eight-fold yoga. The ten virtues that he mentions under these two heads are characterised as sarva bhauma mahavrata. Generally writers on Advaita Vedanta do not make any special mention of these virtues, but take them for granted. They constitute the necessary preliminary qualification for one who aspires for anything higher. They are the 'must' which nobody could afford to ignore. In the language of Immanuel Kant, they fall within the sphere of the 'Categorical imperative'.



There is no holiday from them for anybody. One who is born as a human being is under a moral obligation to cultivate these ten virtues, non-injury (ahimsa), truth-speaking (satyam), abstention from stealing or misappropriation of the property of others (asaya) celibacy (brahmacharya), disowning of possessions (aparigraha), purity (saucha), contentment (santosa), right aspiration (tapas), study of philosophic texts (svadhyaya) and devotion to God (Isvara Pranidhana).

The second stage in the training comprises the duties that devolve on an individual by virtue of his station in society and the level he has reached in spiritual ascent. These duties are collectively known as varnasrama dharma. The four castes and the four orders of life have specific duties attached to them. They are not binding on all but only on those who belong to that particular caste or that particular order of life. If one is a brahmin, then such and such duties are binding on him; similarly, if one is a brahmacharin, then such and such duties are incumbent on him. Since the binding nature of these duties depends on a condition, they fall within the sphere of the 'hypothetical imperative'. These duties are also generally taken for granted by writers on Advaita Vedanta. Sankara states in his Aparokshanubhuti (3) that one can win the grace of God only by the proper performance of the duties that are binding on him by virtue of the varna and the asrama to which he belongs. We may presume that Vidyaranya, like other writers on Advaita Vedanta, takes all this for granted.

The next stage in the sadhana comprises karma and bhakti. The due performance of the rituals enjoined

by the Veda is very necessary to bring about purification of the mind. To cleanse it of the age-long impurities like lust, anger, greed, delusion, arrogance and conceit which have settled on it from a dateless past, meticulous performance of Nitya and Naimittika karma is absolutely essential. It not only prepares the mind and makes it fit to receive the highest knowledge, but also creates the *desire* to acquire that knowledge. This is the view of Vachaspati. In support of this view he cites the passage from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (IV. iv. 22) which says : "that self the brahmins *desire* to know through the study of the Veda, through sacrifice, through gifts and through austerities like fasting". When the desire is awakened through the performance of Vedic rituals, the man pursues knowledge by means of Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana. The author of the Vivarana, however, thinks that the due performance of Vedic rituals has a more positive part to play. It not only creates the desire to know but actually contributes to knowledge.

In whatever sense we take it, Vedic Karma is only a remote aid to Brahman-realisation. It is *arad upa-karaka* as Sankara puts it. Vidyaranya also takes the same view. It proves its usefulness only indirectly through the cleansing of the mind and making it fit to receive the final intuition. By itself it cannot lead to liberation. Advaita sharply differs from the Mimamsa in this respect. Sankara does not even allow the combination of Karma and Jnana. He opposes the notion of Jnana-karma-samuccaya in no uncertain terms. The Mimamsa-cum-advaita which was advocated by thinkers like Mandana Misra, Bhartru Prapancha and



Brahmadatta comes in for sharp criticism in the writings of Sankara. Vidyananya also is critical of this notion in his *Vivarana Prameya Sangraha*. Like Sankara he too believes that Jnana is the sole means to deliverance.

But Sankara does not undermine the importance of Vedic karma. Rather he insists on its proper performance till the knowledge of Brahman is attained. Sureswara also takes the same view. When, however, Brahman-knowledge has dawned on an individual, there is no question of his dropping the rituals; rather they drop of their own accord. Like clouds disappearing at the end of the rainy season, they fall off when once the final intuition has dawned.

### **Bhakti**

In the scheme of sadhana a more important place is assigned to Bhakti. Sankara speaks of it in his *Viveka Chudamani* (32) as the most important of the ingredients which make for deliverance. Saguna Brahman and the other lesser manifestations of Isvara are recognised only as supports for meditation. This is the reason why Saguna Brahman is spoken of as upasya Brahman. Vidyananya recognises the need for Upasana or worship. Wrong notions relating to the Highest are to be removed by the steady practice of devout meditation. "Wrong notions are to be removed by concentration. This concentration arises from worship. That is the reason why upasana is considered even in the sastra relating to Brahman" V. P. VII. 104—105.

As all the lower gods are only aspects of Saguna Brahman, they are also fit objects for worship. "The

Lord, Sutratman, Virat, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Indra, Agni and the rest, as all these are verily the limbs of the Lord, they will give fruits if they are worshipped". V. P. VI 205—206.

About the practice of yoga (mind concentration), Vidyananya is not very enthusiastic. It will secure cessation of duality only for the time being. It is therefore no sure remedy. This opinion he expresses in V. P. IV. 38.39. But he grows more enthusiastic about it in the chapter entitled 'Yogananda' in his *Vedanta Panchadasi*. In this chapter he lays down a two-fold discipline, that of Jnana which he calls Sankhya after the Gita, and that of yoga. The former is meant for men with sharp intellects and the latter for men of dull understanding. Yoga is contemplation of Brahman in a steady and continuous manner. The knowledge of Brahman that men of dull understanding will derive from the formal study of the Veda (adhyayana) will serve for purposes of contemplation. With the steady practice of contemplation, their knowledge of Brahman will become clearer and ultimately lead them to the path of Jnana.

The surest means to deliverance, however, is Jnana. As bondage is due to ignorance, it can be removed only by the acquisition of knowledge. It is of course the knowledge of Brahman that will dispel the wrong notion about our own real nature. In his *Vivarana Prameya Sangraha*, Vidyananya has made his position very clear in regard to this question. He has said that Jnana is the sovereign remedy for removing the bondage arising from our ignorance. Though he recognises the



need for karma and bhakti he does not believe that either of them or both in combination can take us to liberation. They are at best preliminary aids that prepare the ground for the final intuition. That intuition itself could come only from the knowledge arising from the hearing, the cogitating and the meditating of the Mahavakyas. There is no question of combining Karma with Jnana as some of the pre-Sankara period advaitins believed or bhakti with Jnana as Madhusudana Saraswati, a thinker of the post-Sankara period believed. Jnana is the sole means.

---

## Chapter VIII

### MOKSHA

In his Jivan Mukti Viveka, Vidyanaraya defines bondage as consisting in these functions of the mind which are characterised by feelings of pleasure and pain. These are the concomitants of action and enjoyment. To get over one's bondage one should neutralise the impressions (vasanas) which draw a man to further action and further enjoyment. Such neutralisation is possible by determined effort. Man need not think that he is helpless before an overmastering fate or blind power. He is a free being and he can overcome all obstacles by suitable means. He need not think that the vasanas will act like a dead-weight on him and bind him hand and foot. He is the master of his own destiny. Vidyanaraya strikes this refreshingly cheerful note in the beginning of his Jivan Mukti Viveka. As if to reinforce what he has said in his Vivarana Prameya Sangraha, he affirms again that Jnana is the sole means for getting over all obstacles and realising our true nature. We can acquire Jnana even without formal renunciation. With the onset of the right kind of knowledge all bondage will snap and the man will feel free like the birds of the air.

The joy that comes of that freedom is fully set forth in the Panchadasi VII. 292-297. Vidyanaraya goes into ecstasies while describing the joy that comes with the breaking of the bonds.



“Fortunate am I, fortunate am I; I know directly  
myself as eternal.  
Fortunate am I, fortunate am I; The bliss of  
Brahman shines clearly in me.  
Fortunate am I, fortunate am I; I do not now  
see the misery of Samsara.  
Fortunate am I, fortunate am I; My ignorance  
has run away somewhere.  
Fortunate am I, fortunate am I; Nothing remains  
to be done by me.  
Fortunate am I, fortunate am I; All that need be  
obtained has now been obtained”

With this attainment of freedom he will feel that he is not bound by obligations of any kind. The injunctions and prohibitions of the Veda will not bind him any longer. He will not allow them to sit tight on him. Rather he will feel that he is quite free to interpret them in his own way in the light of his plenary experience. This, however, does not mean that he will do what is wrong or what is prohibited in the Veda. It only means that automatically and as if by instinct he will do what is right. His mind will not be torn by doubts and difficulties or by alternative courses of action. Without any effort, without weighing the pros and cons, he will put his finger on the right spot and do what is right. Virtues like non-violence, non-hatred, non-aggression will come to him automatically without calling for any special effort.

Supernatural powers also may come to him with the onset of knowledge but he will not be lured by them. He will not allow them to deflect him from his

main purpose. "The acquisition of such powers helps not a jot towards the attainment of the highest beatitude of life." This is his opinion of supernatural powers (siddhis) and he has expressed it categorically in his Jivan Mukti Viveka.

Like Sankara, Vidyaranya thinks that Sannyasa is necessary to be able to pursue knowledge in a single minded manner without distractions on any kind. Unless one frees oneself from obligations of every kind one will not be able to devote oneself whole-heartedly to the pursuit of knowledge. Jnana Marga is like a jealous mistress. She will not brook a rival. She will not allow her devotee to divide his attention between her and some one else. Such thorough-going devotion to the Jnana Marga is possible only for one who has freed himself from obligations of every kind. Such freedom comes only with formal renunciation. This is vidvat sannyasa. "If the liberated is ever oppressed by any of the least sense of duty, he is just so many removes away from right knowledge".

Such a Jivan Mukta may continue in the embodied condition till the karma that has become operative is exhausted. When it has spent its force, his body will fall and there is no further rebirth for him. Merely because he continues in the embodied condition for sometime, we need not think that his knowledge is not full or that there is a trace of ignorance still left in him. Vachaspati, following Mandana, thinks that Jivan Mukti is a contradiction in terms. Since there is an unresolved conflict in that condition, it cannot be said to be real freedom. The only real freedom is that which comes after death.



But there is no justification for this belief. If he continues in the embodied condition it does not necessarily mean that there is still a trace of ignorance (ajnana lesa) left in him. His continuing in the embodied condition may be otherwise explained. Karma which has become operative is like the potter's wheel. It will come to a stop only when the momentum that it has received is exhausted. Or, it may be likened to the sped arrow. Once the arrow has left our hands, there is no recalling it. It will fall down only when it has hit the mark.

The important point is that though the Jiva continues to live in the body, it does not identify itself with it. He uses it as an instrument wherewith to carry out God's will. He disowns it and places it completely at the disposal of Isvara. It is for Isvara to use it as He thinks fit. He will no longer be affected by the vicissitudes of the body.

An incidental advantage arising from the Jivan Mukta continuing in the embodied condition for sometime is that he will be a living example to the rest of mankind in selfless action. Such an example will prove more useful than dozens of discourses on Nishkama karma. Another advantage is that such a man is the fittest one to give us instruction about Brahman. Only those who have realised Brahman can speak with authority about the nature of Brahman. Those who rely on mere book-knowledge cannot prove to be efficient teachers. This is stated in the Upanishad (Katha I. ii. 8.) and in Sankara's commentary on Gita (IV, 34). Vidyanaraya refers to Yagnavalkya who taught

the highest truth to king Janaka. If physical death should synchronise with the dawn of enlightenment, we will be the losers. There will be none to instruct truth from direct experience.

Whether the realisation is of the conditioned or unconditioned Brahman is again a debated question. Vachaspati thinks that it is the conditioned or Saguna Brahman that is realised. The unconditioned or attributeless Brahman is beyond all relations. There is no question of its being veiled by ignorance and later manifested by knowledge. It must, therefore, be Saguna Brahman that is veiled by avidya and is subsequently revealed by knowledge. Hence, according to Vachaspati, realisation means merger in Saguna Brahman or Isvara. Any Jiva that is so merged will have to stay on till all the Jivas find their way into it. Then all the Jivas along with Isvara will merge in the attributeless Brahman. This is the doctrine of Sarva Mukti. Appayya Dikshitar endorses this view.

But author of the Vivarana and Vidyanaraya do not agree with this view. They rather believe that any Jiva that acquires the right knowledge will straightaway be absorbed in the attributeless Brahman as soon as the body falls. There is no question of its having to wait in a half-way house till all the other Jivas also find their way into it. They cite the Chandogya text (VI. xiv. 2) तस्य तावदेवचिरं यावन्नविमोक्ष्ये अथ संपत्स्ये in support of their contention. This text means that for his complete absorption in the attributeless Brahman he has to wait only till his body falls. The Karma mukti,



of which Sankara speaks, does not really lend support to Vachaspati's view. It does not mean that all finite selves have to rest in Isvara till all souls find their way into it. It means that those who have worshipped Saguna Brahman while they were living, go, after death, to Brahmaloka by the way of the Gods (Devayana). They rest there for sometime, acquire the knowledge of the Nirguna Brahman and then are merged in it.

### **Estimate**

From the account of Vidyaranya's contribution to the development of advaitic thought that is given in the foregoing pages it will become clear that he occupies perhaps the top-most place among post-Sankara exponents of Advaita Vedanta. Readers will also notice that his conclusions have an authentic ring about them. They arise from first hand experience. Being a Jivan Mukta himself he is able to speak from personal conviction. Another remarkable feature about his exposition is his attempt to lessen the difference between the two opposing camps and bring about a rapprochement between them. Attention has been called to the several instances in which he has tried to do this. With his penetrating intellect he could discover that the so-called differences arose from pressing analogies beyond their proper limits and hence they were more verbal than material. Vidyaranya's writings, therefore, furnish a refreshing contrast to the polemical writings of many others.

---

## **The Age of Vidyaranya**

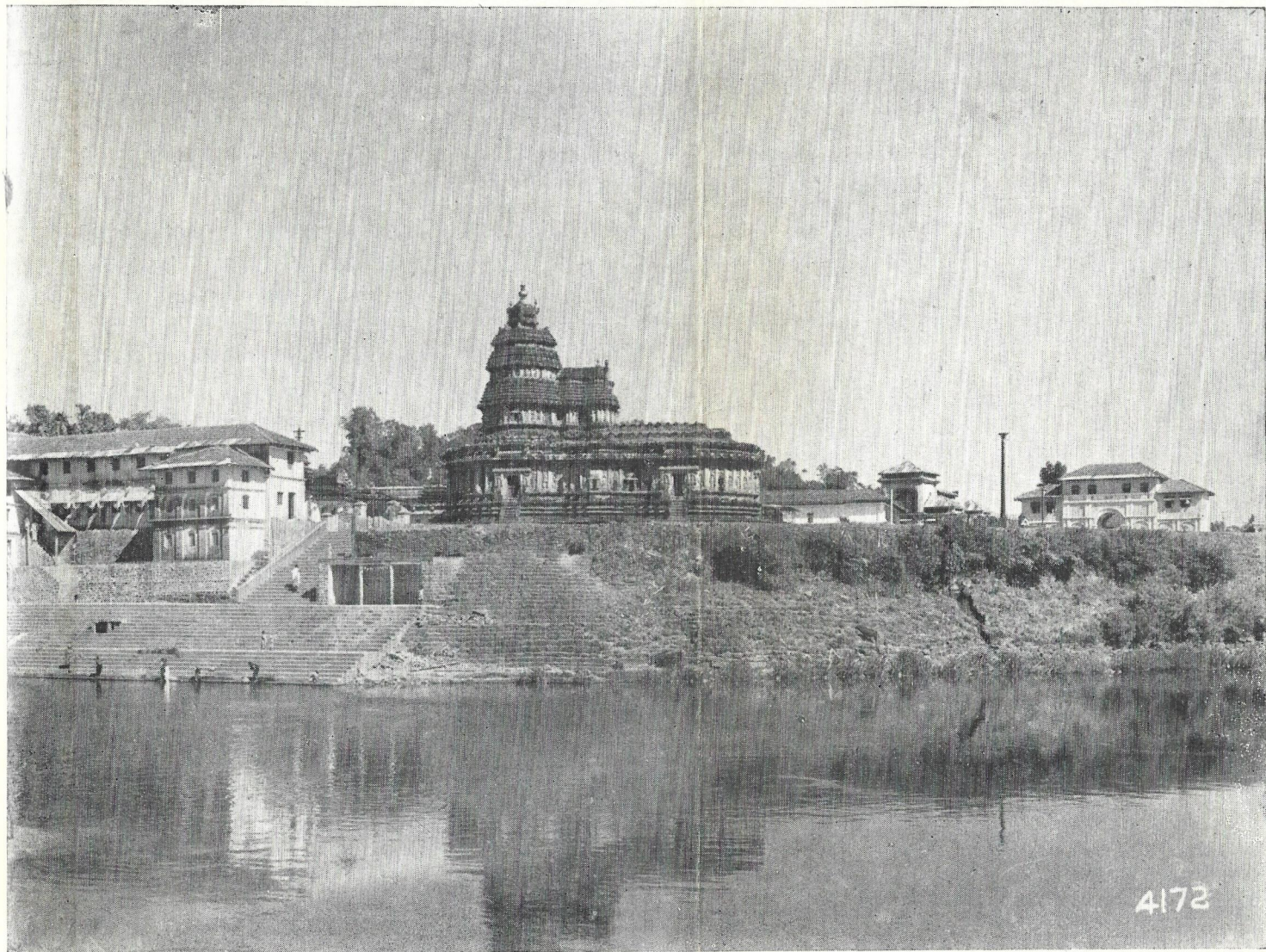
### **PART THREE**

### **ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE**

*By*

K. R. SRINIVASAN





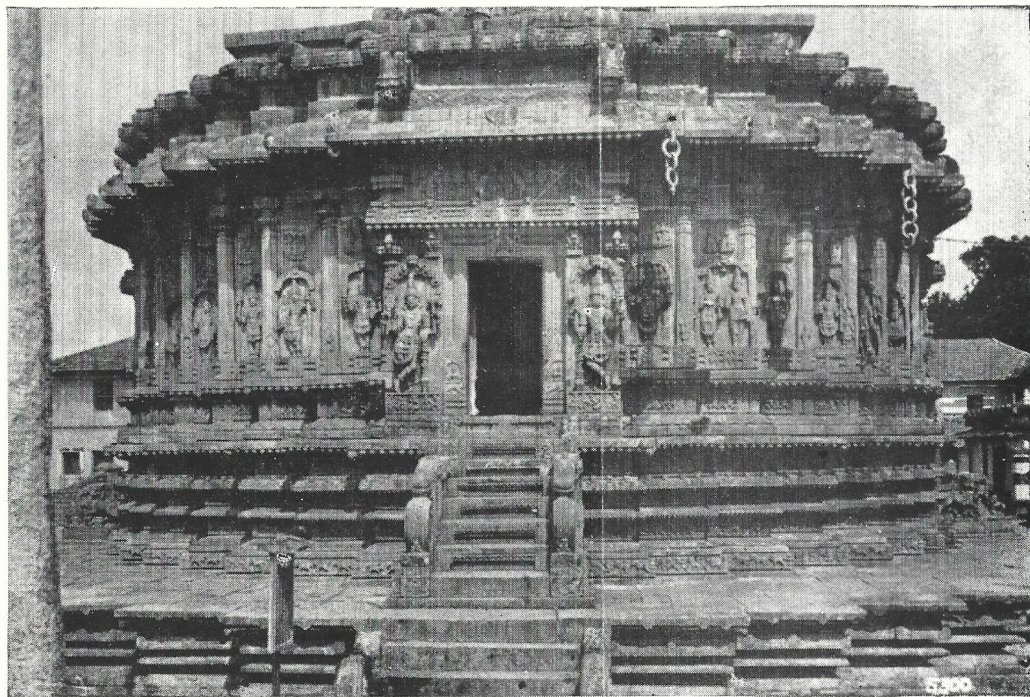
The beautiful landscape of Sringeri. Tunga river flows round the Vidyasamkara temple and Sri Saradambal temple seen in the foreground. Sri Sadvidya Pathasala and Sankara Kripa, the Guest House, are also seen.





View of Vidyasamkara temple from South-East. Sculptural panels on the southern side are seen.





Vidyasamkara temple, the Southern Gate.

*[ Acknowledgement : All photographs in this book are obtained through the courtesy of the Archeological Survey of India, Madras and Mysore (Karnataka) and our grateful thanks to them for the permission to use them. ]*



## THE VIDYA SAMKARA TEMPLE

### SRINGERI

Picturesquely set amidst the green hills of the Sahyadri high ranges in the Malnad, (Karnataka State), on the high bank of the pellucid Tunga<sup>1</sup> the Vidya Samkara temple stands perched in all majesty like a *rajahamsa*. This noble edifice is unlike any other temple in its make-up, and hence unique in its form, content and significance. The swift waters of the Tunga, approaching a point west of and behind this great temple from between the hills in the south, skirt the southern and eastern sides of this east-facing temple, to flow north again, forming two *uttaravahini* loops once before reaching the temple and again after passing its southern side. This feature adds sanctity to its idyllic setting.

Aberrant as the general art critic would call it, yet a close student of Indian temple art and architecture would find in this ennobling edifice much that reveals in its form and make up a purposeful, intelligent and imaginative blend of elements from all the architectural styles of the mileau in India—a revelation that while it is unique it is also universal. The spirit of

1. Krishna M. H., Dr.—Mysore Archaeological Report for 1936 (Bangalore 1938) p. 26, says "Its situation is one of the most picturesque in the whole State comparable in some respects with the position of the Taj at Agra".



integration of Bharatavarsha, spiritual and cultural, engendered by Bhagavan Samkara, by his peregrinations over the vast land and his teachings was kept alive by the successive Pontiffs, in this great institution of Sringeri and when an edifice, with royal patronage and devotion was to be erected to commemorate the great sage Vidyatirtha under the aegis of his no less worthy successors as a standing monument of his greatness, the concept and content could be nothing but pan-Indian.

The foundation of this all-stone temple, as a fitting memorial to the great Pontiff, Sri Vidya Samkaratirtha (*Sanyasa* 1228-1333) was in *saka* 1260, cyclic year *Bahudanya* corresponding to A. D. 1338, soon after his *videhamukti*. Though this date accords with the authentic literary tradition from another Sringeri inscription some would infer that it could be soon after A. D. 1356<sup>2</sup>. While A. D. 1338 could be the date of foundation of the temple, the latter year could very well mark a date after its completion, which might have taken some years. Sri Vidyaranya (*Sanyasa* 1331-1386), the second successor of Vidyasamkaratirtha, the immediate one, though junior in age, being Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha (*Sanyasa* 1328-1375), who was instrumental in the foundation of the Vijayanagar dynasty of kings, while at Hampi is known to have started on his tour to Kasi (Varanasi) after the event. In 1346 and again in 1356 the victorious Harihara with all his brothers, his brother-in-law and generals visited Sringeri and made a grant to the then senior Sripada,—Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha who by the time had raised the temple of Vidya

2. Narasimhachar R.—*Mysore Archaeological Reports* for 1916-19 (Bangalore 1917), p.12.

Samkara<sup>3</sup>. The temple thus founded by royal patronage and under the aegis of Sri Bharati Krishnatirtha, the senior disciple, in A. D. 1338 was, it would be seen, just a couple of years, after the historic foundation of the city of Vijayanagara or Vidyanagara by Harihara and Bukka under the guidance and with the blessings of Sri Vidyaranya, the junior disciple, from whose times the *gurus* of this pontificate came to be styled as *Karnataka-simhasana pratishtha-panacharya*. Incidentally it would be remarked, that the foundation of the temple roughly coincides also with the close of the first half of the millennium (500 years) after Adi Samkara's disappearance about A. D. 837 in the montane regions beyond Badari and Kedar in the Himalayas<sup>4</sup>.

The temple is built entirely of granite of which there appears to be a quarry near Sringeri<sup>5</sup>. The use of this building stone was unusual till then in this part of the country studded as it is with innumerable Hoysala temples built of the softer and more tractable soap-stone or talc. The Vijayanagar emperors who soon after the foundation of the kingdom in Hampi enlarged it into a veritable empire, expanding over the entire peninsula, universalised in their entire kingdom, the use of hard granite stones that were till then in continuous vogue in the Tamil Nadu part of their new

3. Venkataraman K.R.—*Throne of Transcendental wisdom*, 1959, pp. 31-32, Narasimhachar *ibid* p. 11.

4. Venkataraman K. R. *ibid*, pp. 8,11,32. While the first Acharya Adi Samkara, thus disappeared-beyond ken into the depths of the Himalayas, his successor in the time, Vidyasamkara Tirtha, entered the bowels of the earth into a dark underground cell in *Jambikayoga* that was covered up and attained *videhamukti*.

5. Krishna, M. H. Dr.—*Ibid*, p.26.



empire as also in the adjoining part of Mysore, that much earlier formed the Ganga kingdom, while north and west of it the material of construction of temples was one or other of the softer varieties of stone—sandstone, schist, limestone, soap-stone and laterite. Possibly this is one of the earliest such granite structures, in the northern part of the Vijayanagara empire, as could also be a few more in the capital—Vijayanagar (Hampi) itself. It is, however, the earliest known construction in the Malnad area, that later constituted the Ikkeri (Keladi) viceroyalty, to be built of granite, a material hitherto unknown and not used right from the times of the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, and the Hoysalas. In spite of its novelty and inherent hardness calling for different tools and methods, its adaptation has been made with diligence, and the architectural and sculptural rendering fine. Instead of adapting in its make up a purely regional or provincial style its architecture marks a definite break from the local ethos and blends in itself much of the two major stone-temple traditions of the south—the Chalukyan as it had evolved through eight centuries till the times of the Hoysalas and of the Pallava-Pandya, as it had developed during an equal duration till the days of the later Cholas and the Pandyas of the second empire, both disrupted by the Muslim incursions of the south. Furthermore, there is a sprinkling of the features of central, West, East and North Indian idioms in its architecture. Such a combination is evident also in the embellishments and the iconography of the sculptures that go into the composition of this rare monument.

The plan of the temple too is of a singular type

almost elliptical, *vrittayata*, formed by the apparent union of two opposed apsidal parts or *chapa* forms, meeting by their open ends with the curved ends at either extreme, front and rear. The apse on the west constitutes the *vimana* part with the shrines and that on the east the *maha mandapa* enclosing the *navaranga mandapa*, the two regions connected, as it were, by an intervening north-south corridor or transept. With its principal entrance at the eastern apse end, and a similar rear one on the west, the orientation of the *vrittayata* structure is of the end-on type, instead of the usual broad-side-on mode, common to such linear combination of two opposed apses, and orientation is unparalleled anywhere in Hindu or Jaina architecture, or even in the Buddhist series where apses are common, but are single with the entrance between the open arms of the *chapa* or *apse*.

The *upapitha* or lower platform or pedestal is strongly built conforming to the same plan or contour of the structure described above, and it is intended to enhance the height and stature of the structure as so defined in the *vastu* and *silpa sastras*. Such provision of an *upapitha* has been almost the rule in the temples of the Chalukyas and their cohorts and derivatives as also these of the further north, while it is not so invariable a norm in the temples of the far south. It is made up of a series of superposed tiers that are variously moulded and essentially follows the south Indian type, with the *upana* the basal footing, the vertical *jagati*, the carinated or lenticular *kumuda*, recessed neck or *kantha*, and a curved cornice or *kapota* with little *kudu* arch ornamentations, overtopped by the



*pattika*, which forms the top slab or platform, providing an open ambulatory—a narrow *pradakshinapatha* round the real base or *adhithana* of the *vimana* and *mandapa* parts of the main structure above which is of lesser dimensions, linear and transverse. The platform is reached from the ground level by six sets of steps or *sopana*, corresponding in position to six such *sopanas* of the *adhithana* over it that lead to the six door openings, one in front at the east end, another at the rear or west end and two, each along the west and east linear sides of the two apses. Each *sopana* or flight of steps of the *upapitha* is flanked by a pair of elephants, as banisters, each animal holding in its trunk a fanwise folded object of floral design. The animals are not comparable to the Hoysala elephants in similar positions. Thus the component mouldings of the *upapitha*, though following the southern pattern are slightly varied according to the local idiom. The repeated off-setting of its outline, as in the other parts of the temple above, lends a rather stellar effect reminiscent of Hoysala temples of the region.

The *adhithana* or real base of the composite structure of similar *vrittayata* plan, but of lesser area over the *upapitha* is more elaborately moulded and embellished as in all later-Chalukyan and Hoysala temples of the region as also those of North India. It consists essentially of the same *angas* or mouldings as those of the southern temples, *upana*, *jagati*, *kumuda*, *kantha*, *kapota*, *pattika*, superimposed by sculptured bands or friezes; atleast there are five such recessed and relieved tiers, not unlike the ones below, that include the usual *vedi* at the base of the walls.

The lowermost sculptured band is a frieze of horses with accoutrements and with riders on some of them, while others are being led. Though the equines are almost like one another, a few are in spirited stride and exhibit individualities of their own; for instance, on the middle of the north side they tear the ground with their hoof. Intermixed with the horses, are found here and there other animals such as the hooded, cobras, with or without the snake-charmer, camels, tigers, lions, a herd of deer (north-west corner), while at the corners there are reliefs of small shrines-tower like.

The second band depicts a frieze of elephants, accoutred and in various interesting postures. Scenes of a tusker fighting a man or another elephant or lion afford interesting variations. For example, on the south-east is shown an elephant slaying a man, and a tusker attacked by a lion, while on the south-west two tuskers are slaying a lion. On the north west are shown two rams fighting, and a camel led and on the north east is shown a kubja or hunch-back and his mate.

The third band is a *katakavritta kumuda* with a rope band design, studded with flowers on its face and beads in between the successive rope reliefs.

The fourth band is a frieze of lotus in various postures with an occasional Yaksha, *Yali*, cobra monkey or boar (east). On the south side the band shows the familiar Hoysala motif of Sala killing the lion, while on the north-west side are found a peacock with a lion-head a long trunked *yali*, a long snouted lion, all *ihamrigas*, and a tiger slaying a deer.



The fifth band or *kapota*, eaves-like, has a row of drop beads at its bottom line and a series of *kudu* arches along its face. Under the arches of these *kudus* and at the corners are often seen figures of Naginis, Yakshas, monkeys, rishis in *asanas*, frogs, parrot packing a leaf (north-west), anoia snake charmer with his cobra and monkey (north-west).

The sixth, perhaps the most interesting in the series, is a string of hundreds of little panels, cameos illustrating episodes from the Puranas. Commencing from the east end one can discern the following pictorial narrations.

(1) *East*: An *asvamedha* horse, led forward, preceded by armed men with spear and bow, and other musicians carrying gong, various, types of drums, blowing conches and trumpets, followed by a king in a *palanquin* with his parasol bearer, heralds etc. A lady on an elephant, and a prince royal on horse back are followed by attendants, foot-men, horse-men and elephant men.

*South*: The procession moves on until the royal hero is received by a group of men and women, accompanied by lancers and musicians until he is led to a throne and has his feet massaged in open court. The hero, having laid aside his bow and arrow prays to a three headed deity, who is attended by a group, perhaps the eight Dikpalas, one of whom is leading an animal that looks like a buffalo. The hero prostrates before Brahma and Saraswati who are attended by a number of rishis. A lady pleases Brahma and receives a gift, to celebrate which event she plays on a *rudra-vina*. The hero follows the sacrificial horse which climbs

a hill. The defeated hero is restored by a drink offered by the lady, the erstwhile player on the *rudra-vina* in worship of a linga. The hero and heroine are married.

*South-West*: Receiving *prasada* of the linga, the couple ride on the same horse and proceed to meet a lady with a mongoose, probably Parvati. They ride on and are reverently received by a king who prostrates before them and takes them in a procession on a palanquin to the palace.

*North-West*: There they are received by the king and queen who bless them. The couple are saved from the sword of an enemy by the intervention of Vishnu.

2) *Kiratarjuniya episodes*: Arjuna performs penance among the *rishis* of the Indrakila hill. Siva pursues a boar in front of him and a fight ensues. The fight is carried on with bows, swords and boulders.

*North*: The opponents box and wrestle, while Parvati looks on.

Arjuna is worsted and worships the linga in order to come back to the fight. Arjuna recognizes the hunter and huntress and prostrates before them. The story seems to follow the Mahabharata recension and not Bhavair's *kiratarjuniya*, where Parvati is not stated to be present along with Siva.

Siva and Parvati seated in *sukasana*, attended by Ganesa, bestow the *pasupatastra* on Arjuna.

(3) Sri Samkaracharya teaching pupils in attention. He is seated on a raised seat wearing an *akshamala*,



his right hand in *chinmudra*, and his left holding *pustaka*. His four primary sanyasin disciples, sit beside him, two on each side, with a *vyasapitha* between them in front of the *acharya*. Eleven other disciples are seated to his left. The eleven numbers possibly indicate the lineal succession of acharyas starting from Sri Suresvaracharya and ending with Sri Bharati Krishnatirtha and Sri Vidya-ranya who adorned the Sringeri Sarada Pitha, the last being the *acharya* in whose time the temple was built<sup>6</sup>.

In the next panel to the right are shown five disciples, a *grihasta* scholar, is expounding while royal looking personages or chiefs are listening or making obeisance by prostrating.

(4) A palm leaf document is presented. The interpretation is not quite clear. Possibly these two panels relate to the gifts and endowments that Harihara and Bukka, made and which is being read in the Council of Brahmins in the village<sup>7</sup>.

(5) Yogis or Siddhas performing diverse types of Yoga in various attitudes (north-east) sometimes seated on fish—*Matsya asana*—on tortoise, scorpion etc.

6. After Adi Samkara the succession on this line is:

- (1) Sri Suresvaracharya, (2) Sri Nityabhodaghana Acharya,
- (3) Sri Jnanaghana Acharya, (4) Sri Jnanottama Siva Acharya,
- (5) Sri Jnanagiri, (6) Sri Simhagiri, (7) Sri Isvaratirtha,
- (8) Sri Nrisimhatirtha, (9) Sri Vidya Samkaratirtha, (10) Sri Bharati Krisna tirtha, (11) Sri Vidyaranya.

The four primary disciples were (1) Sri Suresvara, (2) Sri Hastamalaka, (3) Sri Totaka and (4) Sri Padmapada.

7. Do the five seated persons represent the Panchayat or Council?

The seventh band which is the one with bead drops below or *vajana pattika* of the *vedi* has floral designs on its face, but near the doorways the band shows varied patterns of the Sri Yantra or Sri Chakra. This band marks the floor level inside.

The eighth band is a frieze of Yakshas, dancers, in various dance poses, accompanied by musical instruments such as drums, pipe etc.

The external wall or *bahyabhitti* enclosing alike both the *vimana* part and the front *mandapa* part of the structure forms two apses each rendered in the *saptaratha* pattern with seven-projections, further offsets—Likewise the inner wall or *antara bhitti* of the *vimana* part is concentric with the outer wall, and forms the *garbha*. The outer wall is adorned by a series of ornate pilasters placed at regular intervals, carrying capitals that conform to the south Indian pattern. Each pilaster has a tall shaft or *danda*, rising from a broad based *oma* or moulded pedestal, with the lower part square in section and the upper rendered polygonal or fluted. The shaft ends in the *malasthana* and *padma bandha* and the capital above it is made up of the usual components, a vase shaped *kalasa* or *lasuna*, a saucer or ring-shaped *tadi*, a bulbous cushion-shaped *kumbha* with a neck or *kantha* beyond, ending in the inverted petalled lotus pattern or *padma (pali)* below the plank-like abacus or *phalaka*, that carries the corbels or *potika* with bracket-arms shaped in the typical early Vijayanagar style *pushpapotika*, with a pendent lotus bud at the termination of the curved arm. Over the corbel runs the beam or *uttira* of the architrave, over-shadowed by



the projected and curved eaves-cornice or *kapota*, which is double flexed as in typical Hoysala cornices and not quite so well and as large as the regular Vijayanagara *kapotas*. The lower edge of the *kapota* has a series of drop-bead ornaments, while its corners are embellished by foliage scrolls or *patralata* indicating the corner bracing or *konapatta* and *kudu* arches mark its length at intervals. The underside of the *kapota* has simulated rib markings as in the Vijayanagar temples and from the four corners chains of stone rings hanging down that are cut out of the same stone—another feat of Vijayanagar workmanship in such hard stone.

In between the pilaster pairs is a grand array of sixty one large bas-relief sculptures of varied iconography occupying the *devakoshthas* that are framed by *torana* arches. Such multiplication of mural sculpture adorning every available space, that is rendered all the more great by the enhanced surface area consequent on the offsetting and returns of the wall, is all after the earlier Chalukya, Hoysala, Gujarat and Central Indian traditions where the employment of easily workable soft stones as against the hard stones of the southern temples, tempted and encouraged such lavish sculptural work and ornamental carving. This only shows that the artists were adepts in working in the new medium and possibly they were from the south. The sculptures themselves in their variety constitute a veritable iconographic museum. These larger wall sculptures deserve to be described briefly in the order in which they occur and taken in the *pradakshina* order.

### South-east :

(1) Indra, four-armed, one is in *abhaya*, the other is in *dana*, the remaining two holding dagger (?) and Javelin. There is an elephant carved on the pedestal.

(2) Four-armed male figure, with rosary or *akshamala* (not fully carved) and *kalasa* (*kundika*) in two hands while a third rests on the left thigh.

(3) Sri Rama, holding bow and arrow.

(4) Two-armed male deity, one in *chinmudra* and the other *katihasta*, wearing a conical *kirita*-like head-gear. Generally identified as Vyasa.

(5) Siva, standing, with bull carved on pedestal; four-armed, *abhaya*, *parasu*, *mriga* and *dana*.

(6) Bhairava, nude and wearing serpents, holding rod (?) and bowl in his two hands. A scorpion is carved on the pedestal. This recalls a sculpture, locally called Atkondar in the Tiruvaiyaru (Thanjavur district) temple in active worship.

(7) Brahma, with single head, (or Prajapati), with four arms - *abhaya*, *sruk*, *sruva* and *dana*. There is a Nrittaganapati to the right and a *chamaradhari* to the left. The pedestal has no markings.

(8) Durga, *simhavahini*, seated on lion, four-armed *trisula*, *chakra*, *sankha* and *tarjani mudra*. She wears a *kuchabandha* or breast band and a *kirita* like head-gear.

(9) Two handed figures, depicting Rama, worshipping a linga, while a smaller figure or Lakshmana



stands behind. This would recall the story of Ramesvaram, the geographical location of which is to the south east of Sringeri and which in addition to Sringeri, is the reputed *asrama* of the Sringeri Dakshinamnaya line of *acharyas*. As such the inclusion of this panel at this position is of significance in accordance with the traditions of the *pitha*.

(10) Nude male figure, standing, four-armed, *trisula bana*, *dhanus* and *dana*. Wears a conical *kirita* and is said to be Sanaisvara. The pedestal has no mark.

(11) Two-armed deity, wearing garland, with a five-hooded serpent at each end. Said to be Mrityunjaya.

(12) Siva, standing, four-armed, *khadga*, *trisula pasa* and *dana*. There is a *padmalanchana* on the pedestal.

(13) Two-armed deity wearing *kirita* like headgear, and *yajnopavita* and holding stylus and palm-leaf book-Chitragupta.

(14) Yama Dharmaraja - four - armed - *abhaya*, *gada*, *sarpapasa* and *dana*. A dog representing Dharma and Mrityu on either side. There is a buffalo-bull marked on the pedestal.

#### South door region of Mandapa :

##### South wall :

(15) Mrityu, two-armed standing, the cobra-loop held by him in front, terminate above both hands into seven crested hoods.

(16) Trinity group—Lakshmi Narasimha with the god in the centre and a *dvarapala*, Uma-Mahesvara, with the bull emblem on the pedestal, and Hanuman are to the right ; and a *dvarapala*, bearded Brahma with Sarasvati on pedestal with *hamsa* emblem and Garuda on left. The major gods are seated in niches having *sikharas* superstructure in relievo.

The bearded form of Brahma, shown as an elder, is after the Chalukyan and northern traditions which was rather quite rare in the far south of the Pallava-Pandya-Chola series and derivatives. The position of Hanuman is significant as would be explained in a subsequent contest.

(17) Dakshinamurti group, with the god seated in the centre in the *sukhasana* pose, cross-legged and four-armed, marked by *Chinmudra*, *akshamala* and *padma*, *kalasa* and *pustaka*. His foot is placed on *Apasmara*. On either side of them are seated deities with cadjan leaf *pustakas* and stylus rods. Figures of *Rishis* are shown on the pedestal.

The Dakshinamurti form of Siva is particularly a Tamilian or southern concept and his place is often occupied by Lakulisa-Siva in the Chalukyan and northern temples. That the Dakshinamurti concept is essentially southern could be seen from many references to this concept and form in early Tamil literature, the hymns of Saiva Nayanars, and more so from the works of Adi Samkara. His depiction here, on the south, though in the region between the two southern doorways, is apt and according to the southern tradition and norm.



(18) Devi-Savitri seated on *padmasana* in a circular *tiruvasi mandala* with four-heads and ten-arms—*abhaya*, *ankusa*, *trisula*, *chakra*, *padma*, *sankha*, *kapala-patra*, *naga* and *dana*. She is depicted as seated in a chariot drawn by a pair of lions. On either side of the chariot base are two seated devotees and on either side of the single wheel are two dancers in *stava* poses. The whole is inset inside a relieved shrine front or *devakoshtha*. On either side of the shrine pilasters outside are two *dvarapalas* and beyond a two handed god offering *argya*. To the extreme right are a couple of four-armed Brahma figures with peacock (*mayura*) *lanchna* on the pedestal—possibly Brahmanya or Brahmasasta. Of the four heads of the goddess three are shown in a row and the fourth on an upper row. Such a representation of multiple heads is rare and unknown to South Indian tradition including the Hoysala phase, but occurs in the reliefs of Angkor Vat, where a god with similar disposition of multiple heads is shown on his chariot drawn by lions. As a rare parallel may be cited the relief of Siva in the temple at Mosale (Hassan taluk) with the heads similarly shown<sup>8</sup>.

#### **South doorway region of Vimana part :**

##### **South-west sector :**

(19) The seven Prajapatis.

##### **West :**

(20) Kalki—of the Dasavatara series—Two-armed holding sword and bridle mounted on accoutred horse. Pedestal depicts the *lanchna* of a warrior with sword.

8. Mysore Archaeological Reports for 1938, P1.IX, 3.

(21) Buddha—of the Dasavatara series—Seated nude like a Jaina tirthankara, with four figures of disciples on the pedestal.

This mediaeval Brahmanical representation of the Buddha, while reflecting the eclecticism, also echoes the merger of the concept of the Jina and the Buddha in this region. Possibly this indicates an earlier decay of the creed in this part and absorption and incorporation of its features and icons in the Hindu pantheons, while, however, the Jaina faith was in active contemporary vogue in the area even in and near Sringeri.

(22) Sri Krishna of the Dasavatara series depicted as Venugopala, with a consort on each side and kneeling Garuda and cattle listening in rapt attention on the pedestal.

(23) Balarama of the Dasavatara series, shown two-armed holding *gada* and *hala*, and with swordsmen depicted on the pedestal. There is a *rishi* holding a *padma* to the right.

(24) Sri Rama—of the Dasavatara series shown as Kodandarama with bow and arrow to his right. The pedestal has depiction of many monkeys and bears.

(25) Parasurama—of the Dasavatara series, holding a *parasu* in his right hand and bow and arrow in his left. The pedestal shows Garuda and snakes.

##### **West or rear doorway region :**

(26) Vamana—of the Dasavatara series. Bali depicted as bestowing gift to Vamana, who is shown holding an umbrella.



(27) Narasimha of the Dasavatara series. Anthropomorphic form of Narasimha rushing forth to destroy Hiranyakasipu, who stands opposed to him holding sword and shield. Narasimha is in the act of tearing open the entrails of Hiranya. To their left is shown four-armed Lakshmi, standing, while to the right is Prahlada with hands in *anjali*. The pedestal depicts a fighting Rakshasa.

This picture of the discomfiture and destruction of Hiranya by Narasimha in his *sthanaka* or standing form is a rare concept.

(28) Bhu-Varaha—of the Dasavatara series. Vishnu in the anthropomorphic form of boar, standing with Bhudevi on his hips; four-armed—*abhaya*, *chakra* and *sankha*, the fourth holding or gripping the Devi to his waist. The pedestal shows the fallen Rakshasa—Hiranyaksha.

#### North-west sector :

(29) Kurmamurti—of the Dasavatara series. Zoomorphic or theriomorphic in natural form. The pedestal shows a demon.

(30) Matsyavataramurti—of the Dasavatara series—similar to the Kurma form in depiction as a fish. Pedestal shows Garuda.

In this Dasavatara series (Nos. 20 to 30 inclusive), both Buddha and Krishna find a place and not to their mutual exclusion as is the wont. The series

depicts Matsya and Kurma *avataras* in their primitive theriomorphic or full animal forms of fish and tortoise respectively. Varaha and Narasimha are shown in their therio-anthropomorphic forms as usual; and the rest in full anthropomorphic forms. This follows the Chalukyan-Hoysala and the Northern traditions. The actual number too comes to eleven for a Dasavatara grouping, because both Krishna and Buddha avatars are included in the ninth and tenth places and Kalki in the eleventh, counting them in the proper order from Matsya, but here peculiarly the arrangement of the *parikrama* order of perambulation of the temples is not followed, the series is reversed for one sees Kalki, the last *avatara* first before he passes on to the others ending with Matsya. However, the exclusion in South Indian grouping of Krishna in accordance with his *purnavatara* concept, and the inclusion of the Buddha among the ten *amsa-avatars* in the series is the usual mode, that had been prevailing atleast from the seventh century A.D. as evidenced by a Pallava-inscription in the Adivaraha cave-temple in Mahabalipuram, which clearly reads.

मत्स्यकूर्मोवराहश्च नरसिंहश्च वामनः ।

रामो रामश्च रामश्च बुद्धः कल्कि च ते दशः ॥ <sup>9</sup>

Such inclusion of the Buddha is also to be found in the characteristic *tiruvasi* or *prabha-mandala* surrounding or framing Vishnu sculptures of the later Chalukyan and Hoysala periods. The inclusion of Buddha in addition to Krishna as Venugopala in the series in this

<sup>9</sup> *Annual Report, South Indian Epigraphy*, 1922, No. 663; *South Indian Inscriptions* XII, No. 122, Srinivasan K. R. 'Cave temples of the Pallavas', New Delhi,



temple is besides being a rare feature, significant, and, perhaps would indicate that while the Buddha was acceptable as one of the incarnations (through the power of his own Maya)<sup>10</sup> it was the philosophies that developed after him that were controverted by Adi Samkara and his followers. The further occurrence of the Buddha form is discussed in the sequel.

(31) Siva as Andhakari—four-armed—*abhaya*, *trisula*, *Chakra*, parrot (?)

(32) Siva as Kalari—Siva : four-armed spearing with *trisula*, Yama or Kala who is in the act dragging Markandeya with his *pasa* or noose. Siva instead of being shown as issuing out of a linga embraced in refuge by Markandeya is shown in full form without linga standing on pedestal and kicking Yama, who stands to his left, by his right leg (usually it is the left leg) while driving the *trisula* into his bosom Markandeya standing on left holds the firmly planted left leg of Siva. Siva is framed by a *tiruvasi*, which again goes to emphasise his iconic form in preference to his linga form.

(33) Somaskanda-Siva—Siva and Parvati standing (the usual is the seated form) with Skanda-Shanmukha in between. The pedestal shows a bull symbol.

10 Cf: *daivihyesha gunamayi mama maya duratyaya*  
(Gita, VII, 14)

*prakritiru svamavashtabhya visrijami punah punah*  
(Ibid, IX, 8)

*mahamaya haraischaisha* (Durga Saptasati, 1-55)

*vaishnavi saktirananta virya.....paramasi maya*  
(Ibid. XI, 6)

(34) Ardhanari-Siva—standing four-armed—*abhaya*, *trisula*, *sarpa* and *dana*.

(35) Siva as Tripurari—Four-armed in *alida* shooting arrow with Buddha at the tip and Vishnu on the shaft in the centre. The Tripuris or three citadels are depicted as three shrine or *vimana* forms as usual. He is supported by Parvati and Brahma.

The tip of the arrow with Buddha and the shaft with Vishnu miniatures is interesting when one recalls the famous Chola painting representing the story of Siva as Tripurantaka (of the time of Rajaraja Chola I, A.D. 985-1016) in the circumambulatory of the great Brihadisvara temple in Thanjavur, with a top inset of Vishnu in the form of the Buddha seated under the tree (Bo-tree). Vishnu as the incarnation of Maya (Buddha) is seen trying to seduce and convert the staunch Saivite Tripurasuras to the Sunyavada creed, so that Siva who demurred hurting his own *baktas* could easily annihilate them when once they renounced Saivism and ceased to be his devotees. The three cities in the painting are shown as three *vimanas*. Again in the same temple there is a sculptural depiction of the same theme of the same date. This narrative in relief is on the outer face of the east parapet flanking the flight of steps, and mounting over the *upapitha* and *adhithana* leading to the transept in front of the *garbhagriha*, behind the *mandapa*. Here too Vishnu is shown seated as the Buddha under the tree at the extreme south, with the three asuras in front, while at the extreme north is shown Siva on the Chariot, shooting down the three cities, shown in three



forms of the south Indian *vimana* (Nagara, Dravida and Vesara). This peculiarly South Indian redaction, in so far as it goes, states that Siva destroyed only the three cities by his derisive laughter, the asuras, though they gave a fight remained staunch *Siva-bhaktas* to the end despite the proselytising attempts of Vishnu in the Mayavi Buddha form. This theme is echoed in the Tamil Tevaram, of the Nayanars in more than one context. The much later Vidya Samkara temple sculpture though continuing the theme in essentials appears to be a slight variant of the southern recension of the story.

(36) Chandrasekhara-Siva standing, four-armed, *abhaya*, *parasu*, *mriga* and *dana*.

(37) Kamantaka-Siva—Siva, two-armed seated in *sukhasana* with right hand in *chinmudra*, looking, fiercely with his third eye, at Manmatha who is shooting *pushpabanas* from his *ikshuchapa* (sugarcane bow).

#### West side doorway region on north :

##### North wall :

(38) Andhakari Siva, in the usual Nritya pose.

(39) Vishapaharana or Srikantha Siva—Four-armed, flame of the poison, *trisula*, *damaru*, *dana*, the front right hand holds the poison cup near the throat.

(40) Virabhadra (?) Four-armed, sword, *trisula*, *gada* and spear, with Hanuman to the right. The pedestal depicts forms of demons. The Association of Hanuman

with a Siva form is again of interest as will be explained in a future context.

(41) Chandramandala group—Principal deity inside a circular *tiruvasi* or *prabha mandala*, set inside the *devakostha* niche, Chandra is seated in *Padmasana* with ten hands—*Kalasa*, *akshamala*, *ghantha* (bell), *ghantha* (bell), *kalasa*, *pustaka*, *kalasa*, *kalasa*. The god is shown seated on a chariot or ratha drawn by two horses ; two attendant deities hold *kalasa* on either side.

(42) Siva—standing, four-armed—*abhaya parasu*, *damaru* and *dana*.

(43) Gajari-Siva—Siva slaying Gajasura.

(44) Hayagriva group—Hayagriva, seated in *padmasana* four-armed, *akshamala*, *chakra*, *sankha* and *pustaka* ; with Vaishnava *dvarapalas* and a pair of divine disciples on each side.

(45) Annapurna-Devi, two-armed, holding ladle, and *annapatra*.

(46) Parvati group—Rajarajesvari. Parvati in the centre with a sakti-dvarapalika and Lakshmi to her right and another *dvarapalika* and Sarasvati to her left. Near Sarasvati is shown a mother carrying an infant on her hip (Santana Lakshmi ?)

(47) Lakshmi, standing, four-armed—*abhaya*, *chakra*, *sankha* and *dana*.

(48) Kapalin-Siva—Siva as a Kapalika (?)—Four-armed—*sword*, *trisula*, *damaru*, and bowl (*bikshapatra*)—evidently by Bikshatana Siva.



### North east wall :

- (49) Kubera-four-armed, *abhaya*, *gada*, *kalasa*, *dana*. A horse is depicted on the pedestal.
- (50) Siva as Brahma-sirahkhanda-four-armed, sword, *trisula*, *damaru*, and *kapala*, with severed head of Brahma, held in the same hand. A bull is depicted on the pedestal, and his consort to the left holds a *trisula* and *kapala*. Both wear a garland of skulls and *mundamala*.
- (51) Bhringi (?) Three-legged with skeletal body and fierce countenance, two of the legs planted on pedestal from the *chatura* mode of dance, while the third from the left knee crosses over to the right, indicating another dance pose. Right hand holds *trisula* and left is held aloft with palm up. This is perhaps a form of Bhairava or Nritta Bhairava.
- (52) Bhairava-four with scorpion on the pedestal (cf. Alkondar mentioned earlier),
- (53) Virabhadra Four-armed with Daksha Prajapati to the right and Nandi on the pedestal.
- (54) Siva, standing, four-armed—*abhaya*, *trisula*, *damaru* and *dana*. Nandi on pedestal.
- (55) Siva, Uma-sahita-standing, four-armed, *abhaya*, *ankusa*, *damaru* and *dana*. His consort is to his left and the pedestal depicts a bull.
- (56) Venkatesa-Srinivasa : Four-armed, *dana*, *chakra*, *sankha* and *kati-hasta*. Lakshmi is shown on the right and Garuda on the pedestal.

(57) Vyasa — Two-armed, with *chinmudra* and *katihasta*, wearing a *kirita* like headgear. *Yajnopavita* and a short *vastra* round the waist.

(58) Samkaracharya, right hand in *danamudra* (?) left is holding a *pustaka*. The head is clean-shaven.

(59) Virabhadra - Two-armed, holding *vina* in left hand and in the attitude of asking for something by the right. To his left stands a two-armed god with *chinmudra* and *katihasta*. Perhaps Siva teaching *vina* to Virabhadra.

(60) Nritta Ganapati-with mouse on pedestal.

(61) Shanmukha-Subrahmanya-Standing, four-armed *abhaya*, *sakti*, bird (cock) and *dana*. The pedestal has a plain face without any symbol.

These larger wall sculptures are either enshrined in *devakosthas*, which are miniature shrine reliefs or inside *toranas* with *nakula padas* or shorter pilasters, carrying the architrave and the shrine superstructure or the *torana* arch as the case may be.

The six doorways, one each at the two apse-ends on the east and west of this east facing temple and the rest one on each side north and south of the two apses have their sills on top of the *adhithana* reached in each case by a *sopana* of seven steps-*saptapadi*, again a significant number. The *dvaras* are framed by ornate overdoors, in the North Indian Chalukyan and Hoysala pattern, though somewhat



simpler in the matter of detail. The jambs are adorned with sculptures of the river goddesses, particularly Ganga on *makara*, a feature again common in the northern temples from Gupta times and continued in the Deccan and further south in the Chalukyan and its derivative temples and sustained by the Vijayanagar rulers who in their vast empire soon took it down to their temples farther south where it was till then unknown. The introduction of a wide-set projecting cornice over all the six entrances is again a familiar Kakatiya design. The lintel architrave is adorned by the Gajalakshmi grouping, as the *lalata bimba*, while on either side is a door keeper, or *dvarapalas* in pairs, two of which are Saivite, two Sakta, and two Vaishnavite as if to emphasise the more this triple aspect out of the *shanmata* which Adi Samkara reformed and refined in his times.

The roof of the *vimana* part surrounding the base of the towering superstructure and covering the narrow *sandhara* passage between the outer wall or *bahyabhitti*, which bears on its exterior the pilasters, niches and sculptures aforementioned and the *antarabhitti* or inner wall that contains the principal shrines inside is rendered slopy. The towering superstructure over the *vimana* part on the western apse in fact rises over the inner apse formed by the *antarabhitti* as its upward continuation. It rises over the general roof level in three distinct tiers of three circular *talas* of gradually diminishing diameter and height. This is as in the southern temples, but the contours of the *talas* still continue the off-set or stellar pattern as in the parts of the structure below, as is peculiar to the later Chalukyan and Hoysala *vimanas*.

It is a system of three series of *kapotas* or cornice mouldings alternating with three tall attics with exterior pilaster embellishments, as in the exterior of the *bahyabhitti* of the *aditala* below. The introduction of such high attic or clerestory over the *talachchadya* or main cornice at the top of the sanctum or *garbha griha* part, carrying in turn at its apex, the *uparichchadya* in three stages is again reminiscent of the Kalinga or Eastern Ganga patterns in the Orissan regional styles. Except for the stellar configuration of the plan one finds that the preceding Hoysala norms are abandoned with the introduction instead of new perspective and architectonics in the composition. These are found attempted in the *sukhanasa* over the *ardha mandapa* roof, projected in front of the superstructure and its rise integrated cleverly with that of the second *tala pada* (attic pilasters) and *prastara* (cornice architrave), its *sala* crest with *mukha patti*, frontal frame and *saktidvaja* finial corresponding to the *pada* or pilaster height of the third *tala*.

Thus in the suppression of much that is of the southern matrix, and in the calculated transmutation of the pre-existent Hoysala aegis, the early Vijayanagar architect, in his quest for new forms has created one that smacks of the Kadamba Nagara style of the coastal region on the west on one side and the *pida-deul* type of the *jagmohans* of the Kalinga or Eastern Ganga style on the other. The retention of the *sukhanasa* in the Vijayanagar style temples of the Kannada country and sometimes, beyond, even in some temples of the farther south, where it was quite unknown or uncommon is significant in this context. The *sukhanasa* projection



of the superstructure, was a vogue in the northern temples from late Gupta times and also in the Chalukyan and its cohorts in the Deccan and Karnataka including the Hoysala creations. At the same time it should be stated that the architect who designed this *vimana* superstructure was quite aware of the geographical location of this temple astride the heavy monsoon swept ghats and it is quite consistent with the local style that had evolved suitable expedients under such conditions. It has done away with such *prastara* or architrave elements like the *vyalavari* (or frieze of *vjala*) *vedi* etc., of the southern *vimana* forms and also the *hara* or string of aediculae or miniature *vimana* or shrine forms that encircle the base of every *tala*. The entablature mouldings of the *talas* have been severely restricted to the more useful and functional cornices or *kapota* mouldings that number seven, five and three respectively in the three *talas*. The *grihapindi* on top with the Nandi forms at its diagonal corners or *vidiks* is a prominent southern feature and a southern *agamic* prescription according to which the topmost *tala* or *uparitala* should have on its corners the *vahana* or *lanchana* appropriate to the main deity installed in the sanctum of the *aditala*.

From the centre of the *grihapindi* rises a short *griva* or neck carrying a ribbed and domical *sikhara*, the ultimate roof, culminating in the large main *stupi* or finial at its apex, a *sine-qua-non* of the southern *vimanas* as opposed to the crowning ribbed *amalakas* of the northern temples. But the *griva-sikhara* combination is bereft of the distinct *nasikas* (arched dormer projections) on their cardinal sides as is typical with

the southern *vimanas*, but the configuration of the *bhadra* faces on the four sides or *diks* with the ribbings displaying a schematic *nasika-mukhapatti* pattern with a *simha lalata* crest supporting a *purna-ghata* (*stupi*-like) on top, would appear to be a stylization of the late Chalukyan type as found in the Gadag and Lakkundi temples. This results in the central main *kalasa* or *stupi* being surrounded by four more such *kalasas* at a lower level over the *sikhara* crest or *mastaka*, and such *pancha-kalاسas* or *pancha-stupis* are said to characterise a *divya-vimana* according to early Buddhist texts<sup>12</sup>.

The *sukhanasa* in front of the *vimana* superstructure and over the *antarala* of the *aditala* below has a *sala* or barrel-vault roof, as mentioned earlier, and a front *mukhapatti* of *torana* form framing its facade. The lower part of the *sukhanasa* has a rectangular entrance leading into a narrow vestibule, that leads into the hollow interior of the upper *talas* of the *vimana* superstructure. The arch tympan or *ghata* over this entrance door-frame enshrines a *tandava* form of Siva, in relief, as characteristic of the temples of the North and those of the Chalukya-Rashtrakuta, Hoysala genre. The interior of the superstructure *talas* is rendered quite hollow and the shell with carved external faces is supported inside by a scaffold-like frame work of roughly hewn posts and cross pieces, a feature peculiar to this *vimana*, not found anywhere else.

The roof of the *mandapa* apse, including that of the intervening transept, rises in two slightly sloped stages on either side and in front of a central more

12 Jataka VII, 17.



raised clerestory, that runs in front of the *vimana sukhanasa*. It is covered over by outwardly sloping long channel slabs of stone alternately everted and inverted as in country tiling. An inverted slab comes over and keeps together the parallel adjacent edges of two juxtaposed everted channel slabs, resulting in a stone corrugated roof pattern as is usual and has been found to be the most satisfactory method of roofing in stone temples of this region and the coastal Kannada country and Konkan and necessitated by the heavy and continuous rainfall. This is a feature which for obvious climatic reasons is not to be found in temples of the eastern and southern areas. In this context must be mentioned the fact that the *mandapa* terrace too is bereft of the string of shrine aediculae—the miniature *vimana* forms, that are only usual over the Chalukya—Hoysala and Kakatiya temples and was continued even in the other Vijayanagar temples of the area—a practice that was almost consistently abandoned in the farther south after Pallava times.

Internally the rear or western apse of the *aditala* or ground floor accommodates a smaller apse formed by the inner wall—*antarabhitti*, which between it and outer wall or *bahyabhitti* of the *sandhara* structure, encloses a *pradakshinapatha* covered over by the slopy roof radiating from the base of the second *tala* of the superstructure which is only an upward extension of the inner wall. The inner apse is a composite of six shrines, one central and the rest peripheral to it. The central shrine or the *garbha* occupies the exact centre of the apse with a large linga enshrined at the centre of its square sanctum (7' 6" square) cell, and facing

east. It has in its frontal axis and *ardha mandapa* of slightly lesser width, and almost square, and a *mukha mandapa* of the same width as the *ardha mandapa* but quite a square. The last mentioned axial *mandapa* has its front opening or *dvara* at the rear of the north-south transept that lies transversely between the *vimana* and *mandapa* apses. Attached to the south, west and north sides of the central shrine externally, are three affluent or lateral shrines, which are oblong facing the respective directions and enshrining Brahma with his consort in the south shrine, Lakshmi Narayana in the west shrine and Uma-Mahesvara in the north shrine, and all the three are to be worshipped from the circumambulatory passage. Their entrances face the three door openings on the outer wall or the *bahyabhitti*, aforementioned, that are reached by the two successive *sopanas* over the *upapitha* and *adhithana* from the ground level outside. In addition to these three are two more frontal shrine cells, square, attached to the lateral walls of the main axial *mukha mandapa*, one on either side and of the same dimensions as the *mukha mandapa* itself, with their entrances on the east, in line with that of the *mukha mandapa* again. The southern of these two shrines is consecrated to Ganapati while the northern one enshrines Durga-Mahisamardini. In the space behind the two frontal shrines that come to lie on either side of the axial *ardha mandapa* closed cells, strong rooms, the one on the north having its only entrance from the Uma-Mahesvara shrine, while that on the south has the access into it from and through the south wall of the *ardha mandapa*. Thus the complex makes for a *panchayatana* of four *sakala* - or *saguna murtis*



surrounding a *nishkala* - or *nirguna-linga* at the centre. This is also a clever combination of the two plans of triple shrines or *trikutas* one where the three shrines are in a linear row as in the Pallava-Pandya cave-temples and the other where the three shrines are arranged in a cruciform pattern as in the *trikuta* cave-temples and structural temples of the chalukyas and Hoysalas.

The image of Vidya Ganapati much resembles, a Hoysala one, but is of granite.

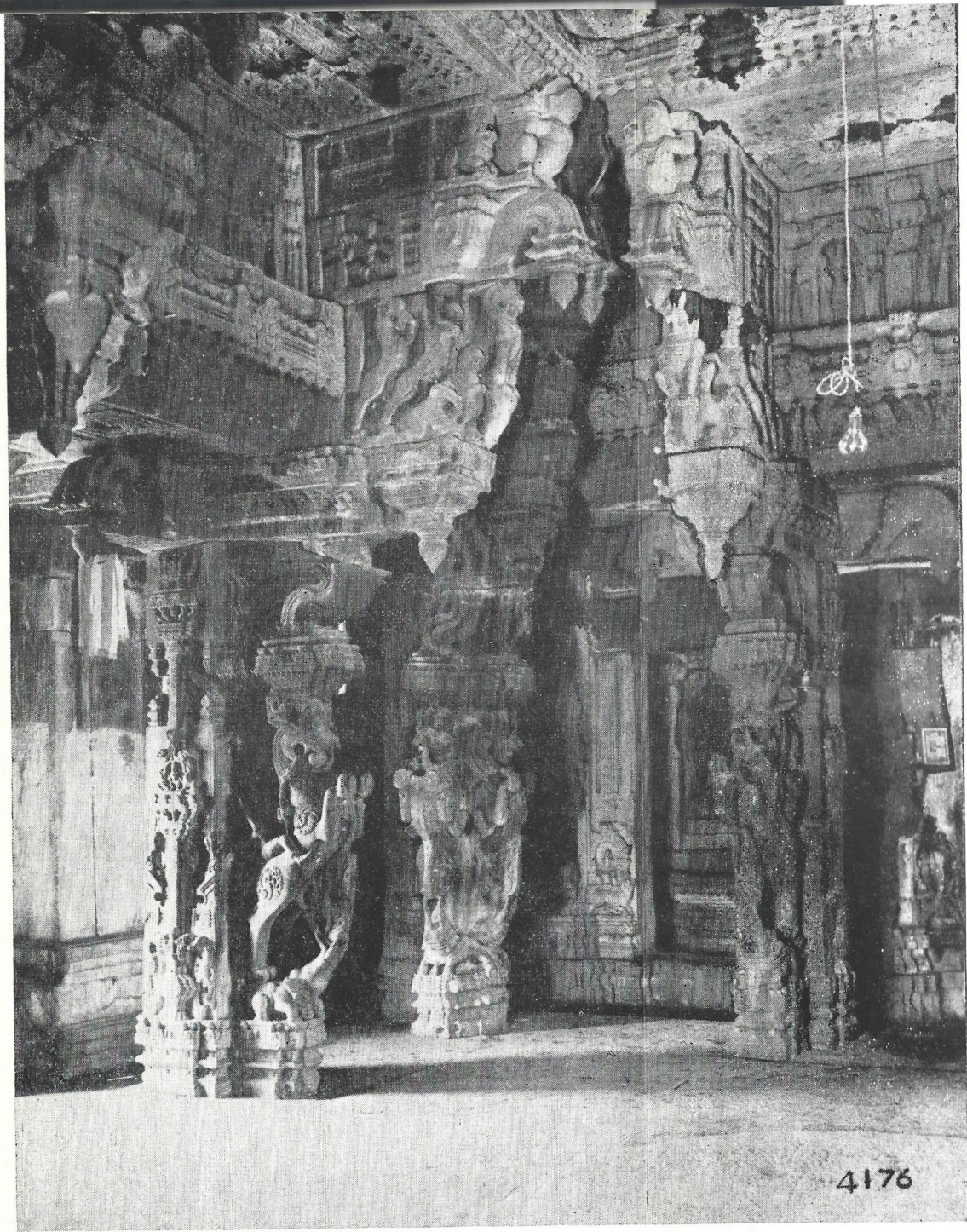
Durga-Mahishamardini is *ashtabhujā*, or eight armed and there is a lion *lanchana* on the pedestal. In the same shrine is a Kala-Bhairava. Both are small images.

Brahma in the south cell is four headed, the three front ones being beard-less, the rear one bearded, displaying a combination of the southern and northern idioms. Sarasvati seated on his thigh holds *akshamala*, *padma*, *padma*, and the lower left is in *danamudra*. A *hamsa* is depicted on the pedestal.

Lakshmi-Narayana, is four-armed—*abhaya*, *chakra*, *sankha*, while the fourth is placed round the waist of Lakshmi. There is a Garuda emblem incised on the pedestal. The *torana* or *tiruvasi* frame around the couple is devoid of the miniature representations of the Dasavartas of Vishnu characteristic of the Hoysala style.

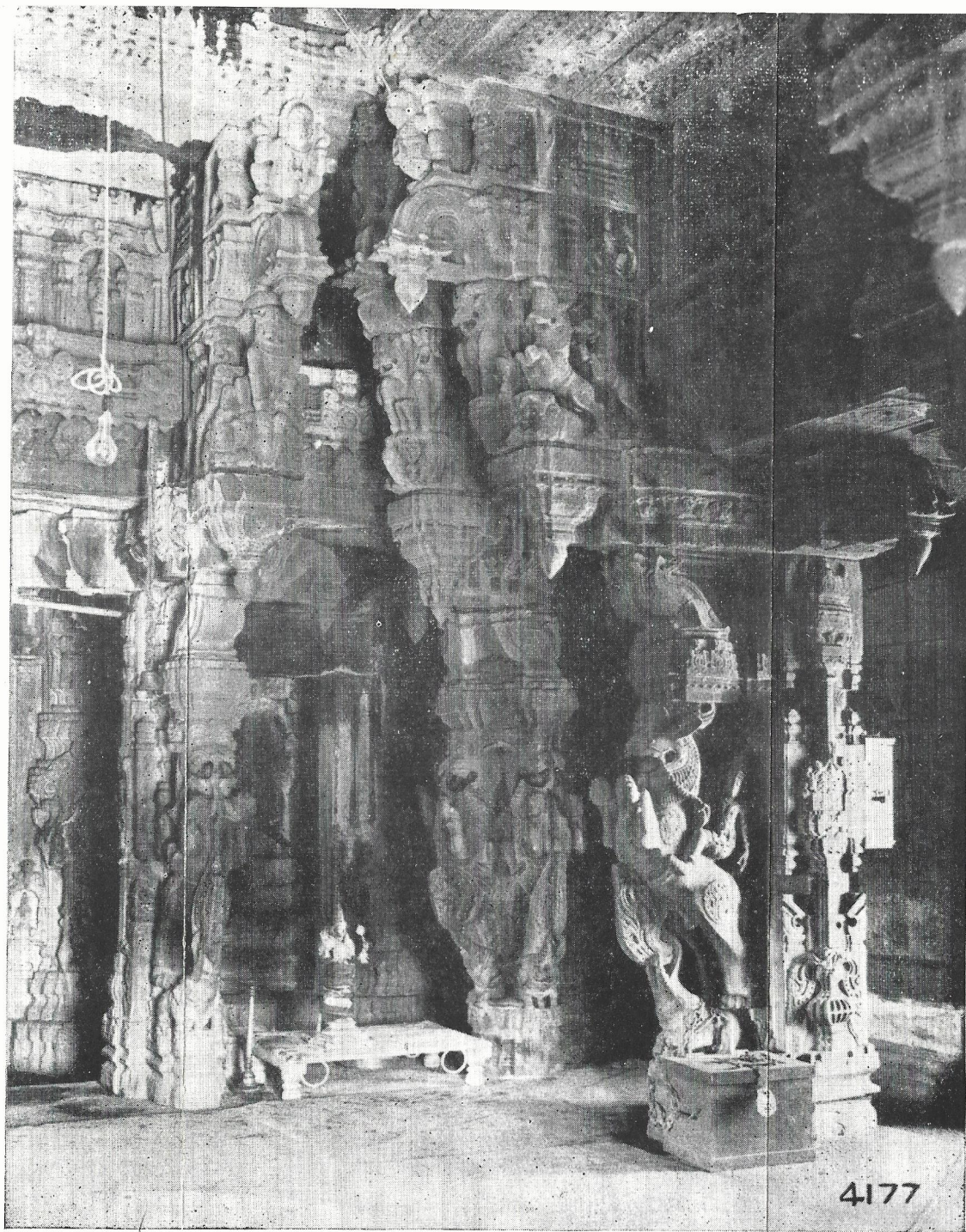
Uma-Mahesvara is four-armed—*abhaya*, *parasu*, *mriga* while the fourth arm is placed round the body of Uma in embrace. The pedestal has a Nandi *lanchana*.





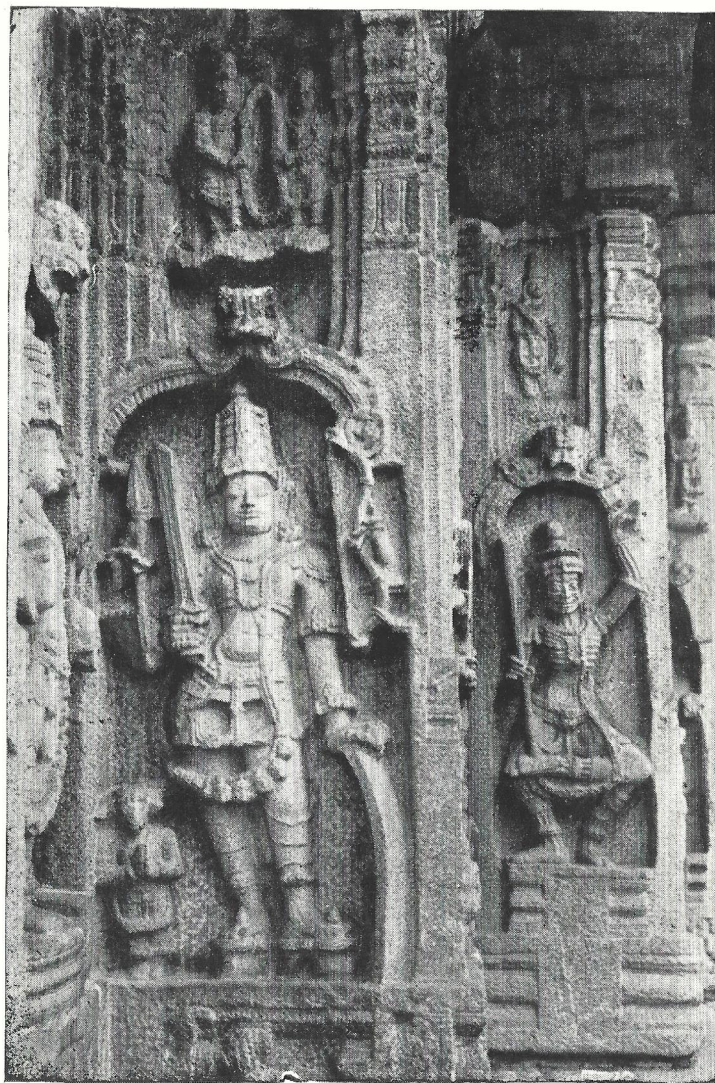
4176





Vidyasamkara temple, a unique monument built completely of stone combines Hoysala and Dravida architectural features. In the Mukha Mandapa, there are twelve pillars each marking one of the twelve signs of the zodiac. These are, therefore, called Raasi Pillars. These pillars are arranged in such a manner that the rays of the Sun fall on them in the order of the solar months. On the floor is a large circle marked with converging lines to indicate the direction of the shadows. This is a remarkable architectural achievement. The photographs show the Raasi Pillars in the Mukha Mandapa.





Vidyasankara Temple Sculptural panels : Virabhadra  
on the wall of the Shrine.



Bhairava





Vidyasankara Temple  
Chaturmurti Vidyeshwara (Maheshwara)



Chaturmurti Vidyeshwara (Vishnu)  
(Through the courtesy of Sri Nanjundappa Bangalore)





Chaturmurti Vidyeshwara (Brahma)



Chaturmurti Vidyeshwara (Stele) (Sri Vidyasamkara)



The Vidya Samkara linga inside the main central sanctum is high placed over a large pedestal or *avudayar*.

Of the two *dvarapalas*, guarding the shrine of Vidya Samkara linga, the one on the south is Hanuman, and not Nandi. The former is four-armed, *abhaya*, *trisula*, *damaru* and *gada* entwined by a serpent. The face is that of a monkey with a *phalaksha*. This and the earlier instances of such association in the sculptural context in the same temple recall the only two other unique representations of exactly similar kind, one in Tamil Nadu in one of the Kunnattur group of Pandyan cave-temples near Madurai and the other in Kerala in the Kottukkal cave-temple near Anchal. Hanuman, it will be remembered, is called *Rudra-Virya-samudhbhava* and has also been imagined for Nandi by Ravana (*kimesha Bhagavan Nandi Bhavet sakshadihagatah yena saptosmi kailase maya sanchalite pura*), when Hanuman meets Ravana after Indrajit had subdued him. The fact that such a *recherche* iconic feature should be selected for this temple would show how a synthesis of religious cults or syncretisation was the penchant of certain stages and the Sringeri specimen seemingly was influenced by Kottukkal carving tradition<sup>13</sup>. The *dvarapala* is therefore not Nandi, as scholars earlier believed<sup>14</sup>. The other *dvarapala* appears to be Bhringi. Both the *dvarapala* forms as usual in the Chalukyan-Hoysala modes

---

13 Soundara Rajan, K.V. 'Two unusual temple models in Mysore area', Studies in South Indian History and Culture, P.B. Desai Felicitation Volume, (Dharwar), p. 137.

14 Krishna Dr. M.H. *Mysore Archaeological Report*, for 1936, p. 34.



are carved at the base of the jambs and over-door of the entrance in large panels that look like supporting the vertical *sakas* of the door frame.

The dividing north-south transept, between the *vimana* and *mandapa*-apses, lies within two cross walls that extend transversely across from one end to the other meeting the inner faces of the *bahya bhitti*, north and south. Its rear wall, which is in line with and merges into the entrances of the main axial *mukha mandapa* and of the Ganapati and Durga shrines, has two more openings, near its northern and southern ends respectively leading into the *sandhara pradakshina patha*, forming thereby the entrance and exit for the internal perambulation round the three lateral shrines sunk into the *antarabhitti* and the inner *vimana* apse, namely, of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesvara. Its front wall has three openings in alignment with the openings of the three east-facing shrines behind, a central one coming opposite the axial *mukha mandapa* of the Vidya Samkara linga sanctum, and two lateral openings each coming opposite to the shrine entrances of Ganapati and Durga respectively.

The eastern or *mahamandapa* apse in front of this transept, closed all round except for the three doorways, one in front (east) and one on each of the two sides (north and south), contains a *navaranga* or pillared hall with nine bays (one central and eight surrounding it), characteristic of Chalukyan and other temples of the north. But the pillars are quite of the southern type, twelve in number. They are *aniyottikkals* massive and monolithic with large attached animal

sculpture on the inner faces of their heavy shafts and columnettes on their outside. Each pillar has an ornate base or *oma*, a square main shaft with numerous carvings on the square moulding from which the lesser column is cut out, outwardly, and the large animals facing the central square inward. The *pillaikkal* or columnette attached on the outside of the main shaft rises on top of a *kalasa* and is rendered taller carrying on top the usual *pushpapotika* that had developed in the south in the late-Chola and later Pandyan times and adopted universally with more elaboration by the Vijayanagar architects, with a main block, the *madalai* marked by upcurved lotus stalk designs and the projected and curved down arm, the *nanutal* expanding at the tip like a lotus blossom, schematically, the *palastaram* with the torus as a conical pendentive called the *pu munai* or *mottu*. These support the beams and roofs of the peripheral region. Each of these twelve *pillaikkals* bear the image of a sign of the zodiac or *rasi* after which the pillar itself is called. It is said that sun light falls in the early mornings upon the appropriate *rasi* pillar, during each of the twelve months of the solar year. Inwardly the shafts have large cut out animal figures, rearing *vyalas* perched by their hind legs on the backs of elephants that crouch over the extended *oma* or pillar base and lift up their trunks to interlock with the pendentive proboscis of the *vuala* above. The elephants show chain accoutrements and other trappings. The *vyalas* often have riders on holding the bridle in heroic poses with conical caps or alternately turbans holding weapons or flowers, and the open gapes of the *vyalas* themselves contain smooth rounded stone balls inside cut into mouths, *in situ*,



that can be touched and rotated within the mouth but cannot be taken out. This has become a familiar Vijayanagar and post-Vijayanagar feature since and is to be found in many other places in the south. The corbel arm projected inward over these *vyala* attachments, is correspondingly elongated and heavy both in its block or *madalai* part and the projected *nanutal* with the *pumunai*, which again is rendered more ornate. In order to reduce the area of the central coffered clerestory, the corbelling inward is repeated by superposed blocks, drawn more and more inwards, the lower blocks over the main corbels themselves carved as elephants, *sarabhas*, and lions over the *alangu* and below the *kodivalai* the next upper series. This is superposed by the *mushtibhanda* over which is placed another ultimate *pushpapotika* corbel that takes the beam or *uttiram*. As stated before these twelve *rasi* pillars are so arranged that the morning sun's rays fall on one of them, through one of the three openings in the order of the twelve solar months, named after the twelve *rasis* or 'houses' which the sun is said to occupy (aspect) in the course of the year according to Indian astronomy—the *rasichakra*. The twelve pillars of the southern type it must be said here, have replaced the earlier, massive, squat, polished and lathe-turned and moulded pillars of softer stone of the Hoysalas and the earlier dynasties of this area. More interesting than this *rasi mandala* columnation is the ceiling of central bay of this *navaranga* which by its very concept of nine bays, one central and eight peripheral represents the *navagriha mandala*. A further indication of this concept would be the presence of a small icon of Sanisvara on the face of the north-western pillar. It

must be mentioned here, that the *navaranga* pattern is made more evident on the ceiling design, which would at once indicate that the four usual central pillars of the central square, which the twelve peripheral ones surround in a typical *navaranga* are eliminated here to make the floor area extensive. The floor itself is marked by shadow lines in conformity with the sun's movement round the twelve *rasi* pillars. By placement of linear transverse and diagonal beams over the corbels of the twelve pillars the ceiling gets marked into nine bays let into the raised terrace or clerestory, the coffered central ceiling containing an intricately carved covering slab. This exquisitely carved piece of workmanship depicts a large expanding lotus flower or *padma*, laid inverted and in the process of blossoming with the outer whorls of petals opened out and yet with a central unopened bud, shown pendent against the back ground of the five whorls of expanded petals. On the four sides of this central pendentive *padmakosa* cling four parrots—*sukha* as if to peck the edible seed or *bhija* and suck the luscious nector or *amrita* or *madhu* inside the lotus of the bud as it ultimately opens out in full. Significantly enough this lotus blossom panel replaces the earlier wonted central ceiling panels of the *navaranga* of the Chalukyan-Hoysala and North Indian temples where it is a *dikpala* grid, the *palas* of the eight quarters occupying the eight peripheral squares or bays with the often larger central bay of the panel depicting a representation of the principal deity of the temple enshrined in the sanctum. This lotus ceiling occurring so early in Vijayanagar art is very rarely repeated elsewhere in the farther south in later epochs, the only known instance being the ceiling of the fore part of the



Kalyana mandapam of the Jalakantesvara temple in Vellore (North Arcot District) built by Bommi Nayaka, a later Vijayanagar Viceroy (16th century).

The lotus symbolising all things, the Sun or Surya inside the *rasi mandala* represented by the pillars and inside the *navaranga* ceiling grid reminiscent of the Navagriha grouping, is quite apt and in its place. This symbolism is further enhanced by the *saptanga* outer plinth and the *sapta ratha* configuration of the *mandapa* apse, indicative of the seven-horsed chariot of Surya. This is again after the familiar invocation to Surya :

*Nama-Savitre-Jagad-eka chakshushe  
Jagat prasuti sthiti nasa hetave I  
Traiyi mayaya trigunatma dharine  
Virinchi Narayana Samkaratmane II*<sup>15</sup>

The three-fold forms and *gunas* in the above Surya invocation are represented in their *vyakta* (*saguna*) form on the three faces of the *avyakta linga* of the sanctum, in the three lateral shrines as Virinchi (Brahma) Narayana and Samkara, coupled in addition with their *saktis* or consorts, in conformity with the prevailing *Sakta* tradition of the place. Their unity is represented in the *avyakta linga* with its lower square Brahmabhaga, middle octagonal Vishnubhaga, and the upper cylindrical Sivabhaga in the main sanctum.

The *shanmata* group of deities, Siva, Vishnu, Sakti, Ganapati, Kumara and Surya in the worship of which

<sup>15</sup> नमः सवित्रे जगदेकचक्षुषे जगत्प्रसूति स्थिति नाशहेतवे ।  
त्रयी मयाय त्रिगुणात्म धारिणे विरिञ्चि नारायण शंकरात्मने ॥

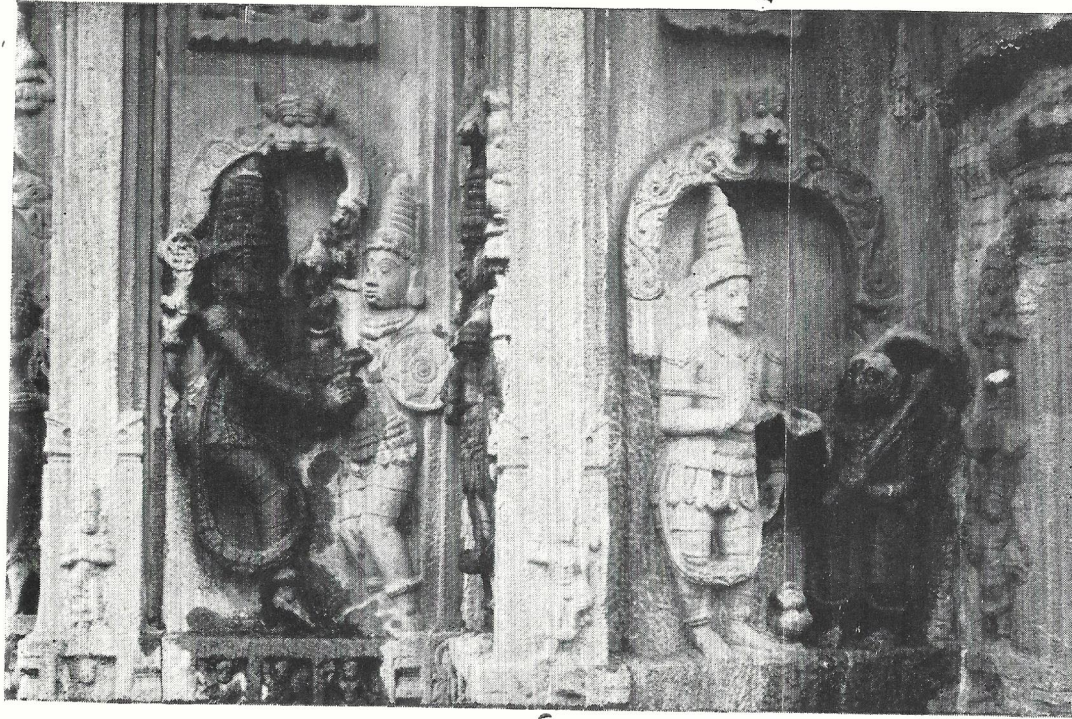
Adi Samkara brought about reformation and refinement are also found represented in the groupings found in this unique temple. Besides Siva both as the *avyakta linga* and embodied Uma-Mahesvara again and Vishnu as Lakshmi-Narasimha in the lateral shrines, we have Ganapati and Durga in the two front shrines on either side of the *mukha mandapa*. Surya in the symbolism of the lotus ceiling surrounded by the grid representation of the other eight *grihas*, the *rasi mandala* formed by the *rasi*-marked pillars and verily the *saptanga* ratha concept of the *maha mandapa* plinth—all these combine to make the Surya symbolising *Brahma tejas* as predominating symbolic at once of Surya and the *sukshma* form of the master commemorated, next only to the very *linga* the *sthula* form, that in its three *bhagas* again represents the trinity in one stele and combining in itself all and centrally enshrined in the sanctum even as the Surya-padma is displayed in the *mandapa* ceiling. The sixth deity Kumara is indicated by the Shanmukha form on the front, next to the doorway, as also by the six external door openings or *mukhas* that the structure exhibits symbolising the whole as of a Shanmukha Kumara concept. These six gods among others are also found represented in prominent positions on the external walls as seen earlier.

The equal primacy given to Brahma in accordance with the Surya invocation quoted above, along with Siva and Vishnu, and the representation of their *vyakta* and *avyakta* concepts, side by side with the Shanmata conception, shows a clear super-imposition of the Shanmata deities on the earlier trinity-Siva, Vishnu and Brahma, unified as *Brahma jyoti* or *Brahman*



*effulgence*, in the solar concept as also in the linga form. Such superimposition of the Shanmata deities on the earlier trinity is to be seen for the first time in material form in the designing of the lower (Pandya) cave-temple at the base of the Tiruchirapalli rock. Here the main shrines facing east and west, into a larger common south facing *mandapa* are dedicated to Siva and Vishnu respectively, while on the rear wall of the *mandapa* itself and facing south, are five large *kosthas* with reliefs of equal prominence - Brahma in the central one (which incidentally with Siva and Vishnu in the two shrine cells, would constitute the Trimurti); Ganapati and Subrahmanya-Kumara in the two western ones, and Surya and Durga in the two eastern ones. In the arrangement while Ganapati (chief of the Ganas) comes next to Siva, in the western cella, Durga (Vaishnavi) comes next to Vishnu in the eastern cella, while Kumara (Brahmanya) and Surya flank Brahma on either side. A similar concept is to be found in the Subrahmanya cave temple of similar plan in Tirupparankunram near Madurai (also Pandya) where of the Shanmata, five except Surya are included- Siva and Vishnu in the two opposing cellas facing into the north facing *mandapa*, Durga in a cell excavated into the centre of the hind wall of the *mandapa*, and Kumara and Ganapati carved in the two recesses on either side of the Durga cell, again the proximity of Ganapati to Siva, which is significant. Brahma is eliminated and Surya perhaps implied by the north facing orientation of the cave-temple itself. Both those cave temples incidentally approximate with the times of Adi Samkara. In temples of subsequent centuries, for example, in the Siva temples in addition to the central



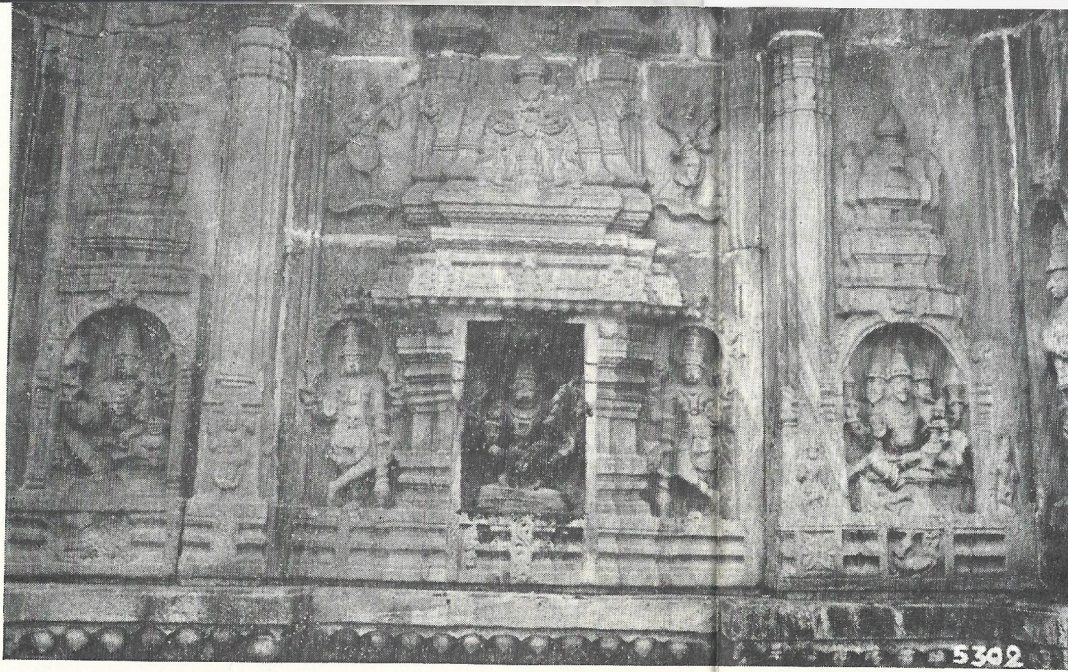


Vidyasamkara temple enshrines the Panchayatana worship. The temple is a Symbol of integration—integration of all forms of worship : Saiva, Saakta, Vaishnava, Sama, Ganapatya ; integration of Upasana (Yoga) and Jnaana and integration of Iswara with Form with the Formless and gives concrete shape to the message of Samkara. The above panel depicts Vishnu in Nrisimha and Vamana Avatars.

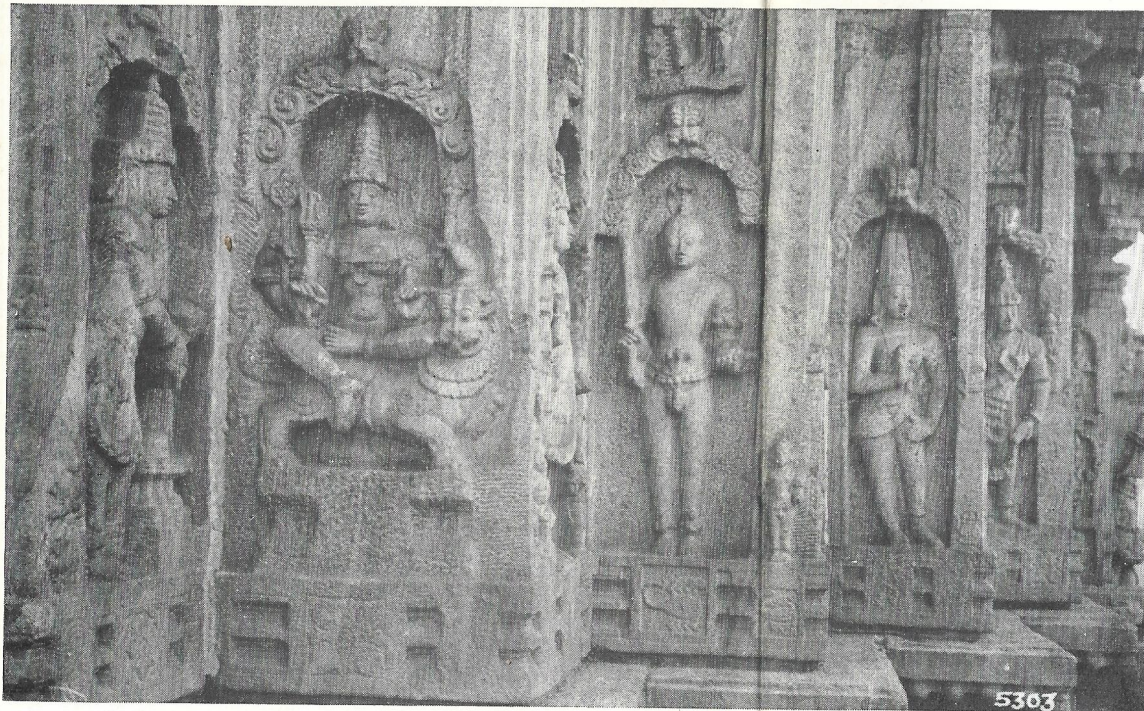


Vishnu as Venu Gopala.





1



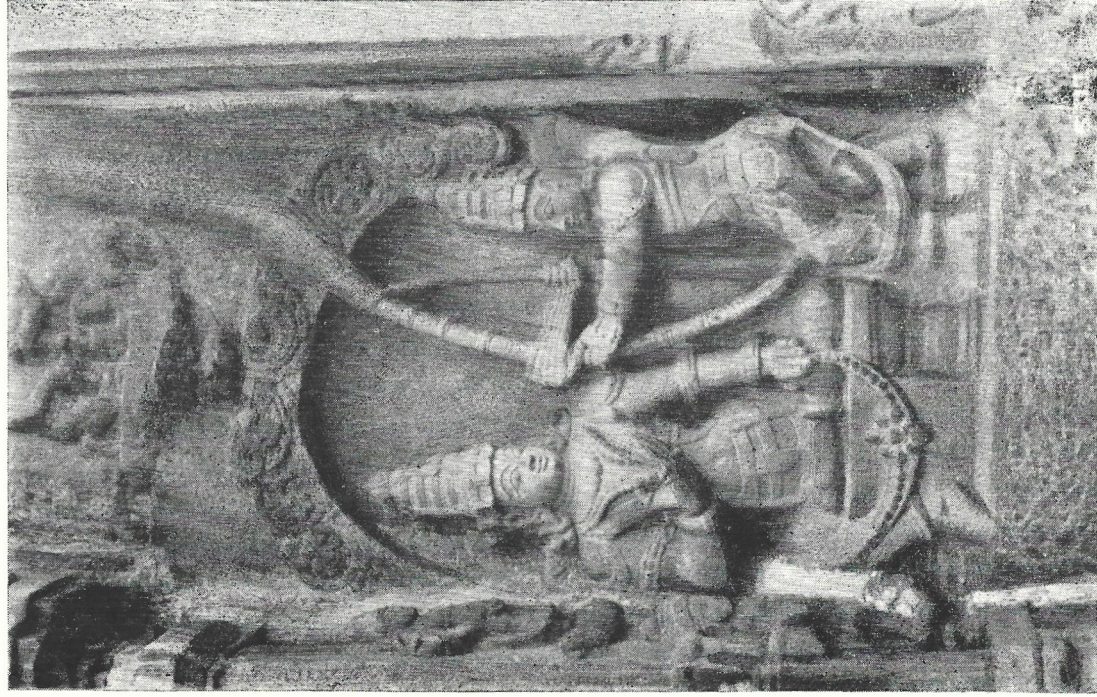
2



3

1. Vidyasamkara temple, Sringeri : Facade.
2. Sculptural panel - Durga, Bhairava and a King.
3. A sculptural panel : Siva as Nataraja.





Sculpture panels on the Vidyasamkara Temple walls.  
Siva on Kamari.





Siva



Siva as Gajasamhaara Murti.



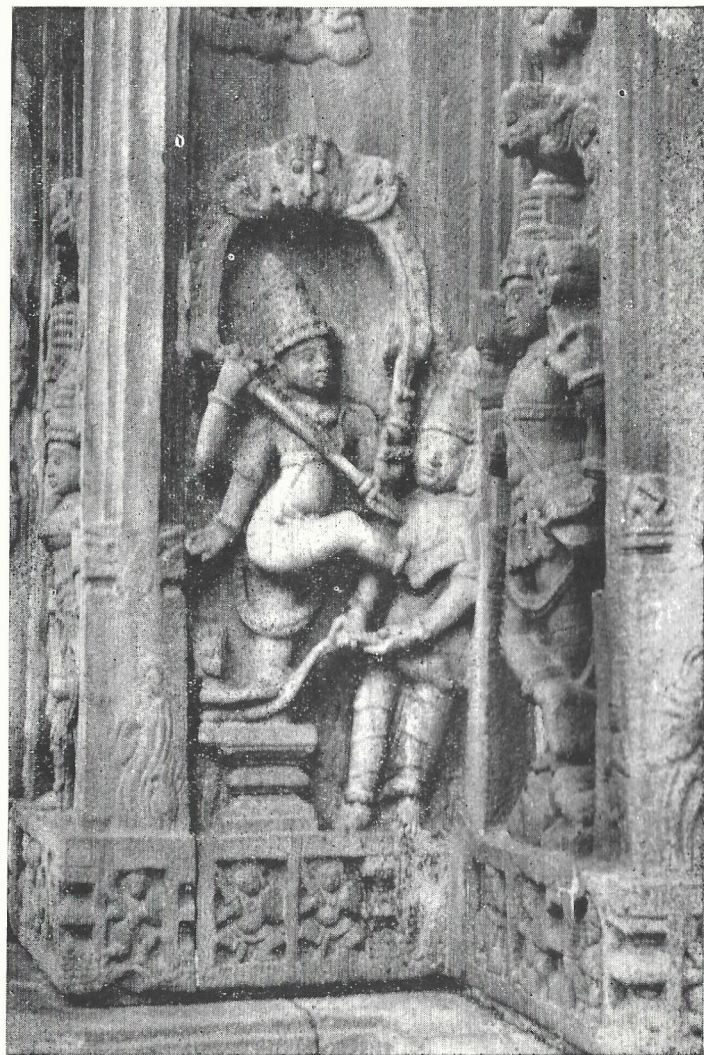


Vidyasamkara Temple Sculptural panels  
Siva as Tripuranthaka





Varaha holding Lakshmi : Vishnu as Varaha



Markandeya holding on to the Siva Linga : Markandeya,  
Siva and Yama Dharmaraja



deity (Siva) the *devakosthas* on the exterior wall of the typically east-facing vimana *aditala* and *ardha mandapa* contain these as *kostha devatas* - Brahma on the north of the *vimana* Vishnu (later replaced by Harihara, Ardhanari or Lingodbahava forms) on the western niche (or rear niche, of the vimana part, Durga on the north and Ganapati on the south sides of the *ardha mandapa*, and the orientation of the *vimana* is often such that the rays of the rising sun penetrate the entrances and falls on the linga in the sanctum. The instance of the Nagesvara temple in Kumbakonam, among others, may be cited.

The primary concept of the triune or Trimurti is noticeable in the earlier temples of South India - Chalukya or Pallava. Mahendravarman I Pallava's (A.D. 550-630) first ever rock-cut cave temple in Mandagapattu was as his famous inscription there proclaims, dedicated to Brahma, Siva and Vishnu. Mamalla's (630-70) cave temple the Orukkal mandapam in Tirukkalukkunram has Vishnu and Brahma flanking the entrance into the Siva shrine. Paramesvara varman I Pallava's (A.D. 672-70) triple called Trimurti cave-temple in Mahabalipuram has Subrahmanya replacing Brahma in the Trinity. In the temples of Rajasimha Pallava (A.D. 600-630) Brahma and Vishnu find a place in the inner side walls of the *ardha mandapa* or *antarala* in front of the main shrines, while the main shrine itself on its rear wall has a Somaskanda-Siva panel in which Brahma and Vishnu are shown on either side of Siva-Somaskanda. An early Chalukyan cave-temple in Arvelam near Goa, contains three steles in its three contiguous cells symbolically representing the Trinity — Surya, Siva and



Kumara, that is Surya in place of Vishnu (Surya Narayana) and Kumara (Brahmanya) in place of Brahma. The ceilings of the early Chalukyan temple as at Aihole and Pattadakal depict Brahma, Siva and Vishnu. Instances can be multiplied but the above is enough to indicate, how and from what sources the designers of the Vidya Samkara were inspired in the concept of this temple and its iconographic contents. In later temples, with the more precise canonization of the *Silpa* and *Agama* manuals of the south, the disposition of these *Koshtha* and *avarana devatas* has already been hinted at earlier — Ganapati on the south and Durga in the north of the *ardha mandapa*, Dakshinamurti, Vishnu and Brahma respectively on the south, west and north external *devakoshthas* of the *vimana aditala*; while in the Chalukyan temples, as at Aihole, Pattadakal and elsewhere, Durga and Ganapati are allotted separate minor shrines facing each other in the *maha mandapa* in front of the *ardha mandapa* entrance, the other aspects of the scheme are not found strictly followed. The position of the Durga shrine to the north of the main shrine entrance and of the Ganapati shrine to the south of it follows the Chalukyan norm, and is appropriate to the region of location of the Vidyasamkara temple.

The dikpalas, a feature common to the Chalukyan and Northern temples but rare in the far south, too are oriented in some order. They are Indra on the east, Yama on the south, Varuna on the West and Kubera on the north, not forgetting the Surya and Chandra (Soma) mandalas.

The inclusion of many Sri Chakra reliefs in the sculpture gallery on the walls points to the equal

importance attached to the *Sakta* cult and *tantrism*, as for the *agama* and *vaidika* tenets.

The blossoming (*vikasa*) lotus on the ceiling with four parrots pecking at the centres in addition to what has been said earlier, may have another interpretation in the context of this temple. Possibly, the lotus represents Adi Samkara (the *Savitr*, *Jagadekachakshus*, the *trayimaya* and *trigunatmadhari*—who is also Virinchi, Narayana and Sankaratman—in short Brahman - Atma Jyoti, too, and the four parrots, his four primary disciples who await with eagerness the unfolding of the blossom, to imbibe the nectar - the divine wisdom that he propounds. Of all birds, the *sukha* or the parrot alone, learns and repeats - a too familiar poetic fancy of all time in India. In Vellore it has become a mere motif later.

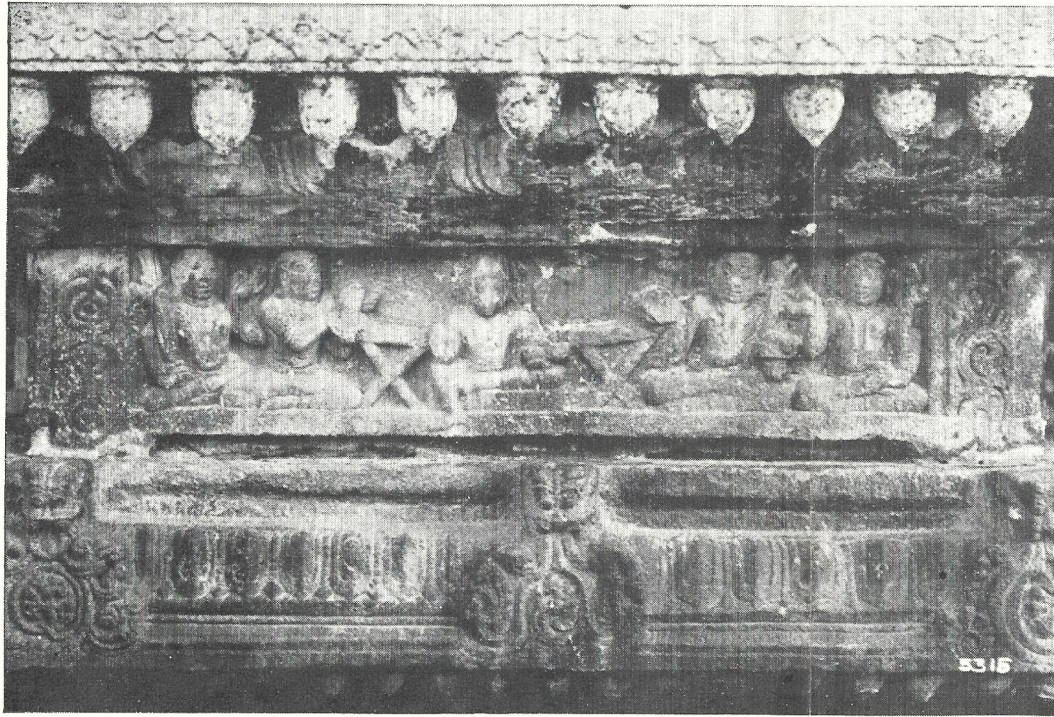
The triune nature of the linga with the surrounding shrines of the trinity as conceived here can be better understood in its relation to the reputed stele called Chaturmurti Vidyasvara in Simhagiri nearby, of which the present case would appear to be only an elucidation. The stele bears on its four faces, below, the figures of Sage Vidyatirtha and his two disciples - Bharati tirtha and Vidyaranya on one face, representations of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesvara on the three other faces, and Lakshmi Narasimha above, over-topped by the linga form. In explanation of the significance of this stele to his disciples, the Acharya himself is said to have stated that his corporeal body too would ultimately assume such a form after the twelve years of *yoga samadhi* which he ultimately commenced by entering into a dark sub-terranean chamber, never to return.



Thus, in all aspects this wonder of a Vidya Samkara temple, is a veritable architectural piece, pan-Indian, as well as unique in its concept, a gallery of sculpture, a museum of iconography and a store-house of symbolism and mystic emanation. In a word, it is a great synthesis in style, forms, concepts and symbolism, an integration that is at once intelligent and meaningful. The design and execution of this great combination and blending has never detracted from the point of view of aesthetics, While the result delights the eye of a connoisseur, its symbolism signifies *vyakta* and *avyakta* alike, and its meaning elevates the spirit of the initiate. The edifice verily rears up its head amidst the montane, sylvan and riverine setting that is elemental of holy Sringagiri, as a pinnacle of universalism one is exalted (*tunga*) on the banks of the Tunga and is the very peak (*sringa*) of Sringagiri. A more pan-Indian synthesis and a more pan-theistic edifice is hard to find anywhere else.

---





Each figure is but a note in the Symphony of the Absolute. From the darsana of these forms, the Sadhaka is led to the dark cave, which is the Sanctum, to realise the Indwelling Effulgence, which the Linga represents. In the process, he leaves behind the six gates representing the six Indriyas or sensory organs including the mind and passes through the central hall where the Raasi Pillars represent Time. Thus, he rises above Time (Kala) above form (Rupa) and name (Naama) and is in communion with the Absolute.

Vidyasamkara Temple sculptural panel. Sri Adi Samkara with His four disciples.

The temple is conceived as a Sri Chakra and is Siva-Saktiaatmaka and represents as such all the tattvas from Siva and Sakti to Prithvi superimposed on the Formless Brahman. The sculptural panels all around represent the forms of Isvara as Creator, Sustainer, Absorber, Indweller, Illuminator and Teacher to satisfy the spiritual craving of different Adhikaris among Sadhakas.





A Sculptural Panel



## OTHER MONUMENTS WITH SRI VIDYARANYA ASSOCIATIONS HAMPI—PAMPAPATI TEMPLE

The Virupaksha or Pampapati temple complex in the Vijayanagara ruins of Hampi is a large temple in worship even today. The complex is for the most part a Vijayanagar elaboration all round an earlier smaller Later-Chalukyan nucleus. This includes the tall and massive *gopuras* on the east. The principal sanctum of this temple dedicated to Sri Virupaksha-linga or Pampapati, faces east with a series of axial *mandapas* in front and a cloistered corridor *mandapa* and other structures all round inside the massive *prakara*, which, besides the two eastern *gopuras*, one behind the other, is provided with an additional entrance on the north. Harihara I (A.D. 1336-57), the first of the Vijaynagar rulers, is credited with having built a temple here in honour of Sage Vidyaranya, who helped him and his brother Bukka (A.D. 1344-77) in the founding of the empire and the city, its capital. The building activities in elaboration of the earlier nucleus should have started very soon, since this temple forms the *chef-d-oevure* and the very focal point of the city, with a broad main street stretching in front of it and was, in the hey-day of Vijayanagar, bordered by stately buildings and mansions. Judged from the vivid account left by the Portuguese traveller, Paes, who visited the Vijayanagar court, this temple-complex seems to have assumed its



present form even by about the time of his visit (A.D. 1520). The lofty eastern outer *gopura* (52 metres high) was originally erected by an officer of Deva Raya II (A.D. 1422-46), and was repaired (possibly in its brick work superstructure and covering stucco work) by Krishna Deva Raya in A.D. 1510. This would be evident since the painting in the Ranga mandapa of Krishna Deva Raya's time, depicts this *gopura*, almost as a faithful reproduction. This Raya *gopura* leads into the larger outer court with a second, smaller, three-storeyed inner *gopura* at its rear that forms the entrance to a more ample inner court. It is this inner court that contains the pillared cloister with subsidiary shrines, that surrounds the axial series of the sanctum and its front *mandapas*—the *ardha mandapa* the *maha mandapa* and the *mukha* or *agra mandapa*. The foremost *agra mandapa* is referred in the inscriptions as the *Ranga mandapa*. It is a highly ornate and large Vijayanagara structure constructed by Krishna Deva Raya in about A.D. 1510. It is linear oblong from east to west with heavy colonnade of rows of pillars inside, that divide the hall into a wider central nave and two lateral aisles, each, on its north and south. The sixteen pillars of the central rectangle are massive *aniyottikkals* or composite monoliths with heavy animal or human sculpture, here rampant *vyalas* with *makaras* below over which their hind legs are planted. The central ceiling of the nave inside is raised as a clerestory over a corbelled system of architrave, characteristic of Vijayanagara *mandapas*, as described earlier in the Vidya Samkara temple of Sringeri. The beams and the upper members of the architrave, on all four sides are relieved by friezes of sculpture, now much obscured by modern stucco work.

But more than this, the ceiling of the *Ranga mandapa* in its nave part, particularly is noted for its painted *chitra vitana* of numerous panels of fresco paintings, more or less of the same style and type as the celebrated Vijayanagara frescoes of Lepakshi and Somapalle. Furthermore, these paintings include what is of more immediate topical interest and relevance to the present work on Vidyananya, a picture of the sage. It is verily a portraiture of sage Vidyananya in procession, a rare and authentic portrait of the great personage. This would bear description in the context of the whole series of paintings.

The western most on the ceiling is a row of three almost equal panels laid across the width of the nave, each separated from the other by floral bands and bordered off by other floral bands of a different pattern. The central register depicts Siva-Virupaksha, with Parvati on his lap and in his embrace - the Umalingana form. Siva is four-armed as usual, and the couple is seated inside a *sibika* like pavilion with *vimana* superstructures. On either side, right and left, standing inside like pavilions of narrower type are the sages - Tumburu and Narada. In the adjoining pavilion of similar type as the central Umasahita panel and set inside the northern panel is the painting of four-armed Vishnu, with Lakshmi as Lakshmi-Narayana, with his two attendants, - Garuda and Hanuman. In the pavilion in the other adjacent panel on the south is depicted Brahma, likewise four-armed, seated with Sarasvati and with two other attendants, one on either side. This scheme of the trinity in mural portraiture follows evidently the same concept as found in the



Vidyasamkara temple of Sringeri where the three divine couples are installed in sculpture on the south, west and north side shrines of the main sanctum in the same order. Considering this aspect, along with the depiction of sage Vidyaranya in procession at the eastern extremity of the painted canopy, it would be clear that the inspiration of the king and his painter was drawn much from the scheme obtaining in the Vidyasamkara temple, with which Vidyaranya, was equally associated along with his contemporary, Sage Bharati Tirtha, in its planning and construction.

The next series to the east of this Trinity panel is one of five panels, the central one larger and square and the two lateral, each on the north and south, narrower and oblong. The whole series from end to end depicts a simple theme that is a continuous synoptic narration of Parvati-Parinaya or Siva's wedding with Parvati. This *vaivahika* narration is perhaps after the contemporary practice of the annual *Kalyanotsavas* in temples or divine wedding ceremonies for which the temple of Sri Minakshi Sundaresvara in Madurai is noted among many others. The larger central panel portrays the actual *panigrahana*—Siva holding the hands of Parvati, the central theme of the whole story. Behind Siva stands four-faced Brahma to his south, inside the side pavilion, the central one or the *vivaha mandapa* being shown quite large. Behind Brahma, in the adjoining panel on the south stand Vishnu and Lakshmi, while in the extreme south panel are shown the sages Tumburu, Narada and Virabhadra, Correspondingly on the other side behind Parvati in the same central panel and inside the narrower side pavilion are portrayed

a bevy of three maidens as if attending on Parvati. Inside the next panel are shown three more maidens, all of them wearing *makutas* like Parvati and Lakshmi, while in the extreme north panel are portrayed Kartikeya, Nandi in human form and with bull-face and Ganapati, all standing. The association of six attendant maidens behind Parvati similar in form, attire and ornament closely followed by Kartikeya on this side, and the inclusion of Virabhadra with four hands and flaming crown at the south extreme end are reminiscent of the Daksha Yajna and Kumara Sambhava and Kartikeya episodes—the six Kritikadevis intervening between Parvati and Kartikeya is very suggestive.

The central part of the ceiling to the east of this *vaivahika* grouping is occupied by an elaborately sculptured lotus, as in the Vidyasamkara temple *navaranga* or *Rasi mandapa*, possibly symbolising here too Surya or the Sun, while at the same time forming the central sculptural ornament by virtue of its location at the very centre of the ceiling. But the large central torus with four parrots perched on and pecking at it, as found in the Vidya Samkara temple, is absent in this case, though it came sooner in point of time after the Sringeri model than the example in the Kalyana mandapa in the Vellore temple referred to earlier in the description of the Vidya Samkara temple. The torus is a mere circle and lacks the elaboration as found in the other two cases. This central lotus is provided with sixteen petals surrounding the inner torus with an outer set of more numerous petals. This large central sculptured piece covered with plaster and paint occupies a square that is bordered on its four sides beyond by four large



panels, two longer ones stretching across the whole width of the ceiling from end to end on the east and west, and two shorter ones, in between on the north and south. The longer panel on the west of the central lotus relief is divided into eight compartments in a row by cross bands, each depicting inside a pavilion motif one of the eight Dikpalas on their respective mounts or *vahanas*. In a row from south to north, they are Isana on bull, Kubera on horse back, Vayu on the deer, Varuna on the *makara*, Nirruti on a human, Agni on the ram, Yama on the buffalo, and Indra on the elephant. The corresponding linear grouping on the east of the centre piece depicts in ten such smaller compartments in a row the Dasavataras of Vishnu, the row terminated at either extreme by a large panel, the one on the south showing a warrior-archer in action, on a prancing steed and that on the north another warrior standing up in action on the back of an elephant. The ten *avatars* of Vishnu enumerated from the south end to the north end of the row are Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parasurama, Raghurama, Krishna (as Kaliya-damana Krishna), Buddha, all standing, and Kalki on horse-back. Balarama is found omitted in the series, as against what we find in the Sringeri temple. Curiously enough, the Buddha form, wears a crown as the rest do and is shown nude like a Digambara Jina, again a repetition of what one sees in the series sculptured in the Vidyasamkara temple. The perpetuation of this iconic confusion between Jina and the Buddha who also often called Jina, in both the cases is obvious and interesting, reflecting contemporary local conception. The panel interposed on the south of the central

*padma* depicts the story of Kamantaka Siva, in a synoptic manner. Siva is shown on the extreme proper right of the panel as a Yogin seated in meditation while the bulk of the panel space is occupied by Manmatha on his chariot, standing in *alida* on its platform with a drawn sugar-cane bow and in the act of letting off a flowery arrow on Siva. Behind him on the same chariot disk stands his consort Rati. The chariot is drawn by a parrot. Below Siva as Yogin, who occupies the upper corner in front of Manmatha's chariot, in the lower register are shown two persons, a royal maiden, and a kingly figure, standing behind Siva's bull or Nandi which too is prancing in agitation. The two would appear to represent Himavan and his daughter Parvati - the sequel of this is seen in the Parvati *parinaya* scene to the west of this described before. The corresponding larger square interposed panel on the north in symmetry with the chariot rider Madana in the Madanari depiction is again that of a chariot rider as its central piece. It is Siva as Tripurari. The larger part of this panel is occupied by Siva-Tripurantaka, standing on the chariot platform in *alida* drawing the bow to let off the arrow on the triple cities or aerial citadels - the Tripura. Here too, the shaft of the arrow contains a depiction of standing Vishnu, his crown forming the tip of the arrow-head, more or less as seen in the Vidya Samkara temple sculpture and discussed in that context. Siva with four arms is shown in his Virupaksha form with moustache and the five-hooded serpent entwining his neck darts forward to smite at the occupants of the Triple cities. The two wheels of the chariot are shown as the Sun and the Moon. Siva wears a *mundamala*, the chariot



drawn by a team of four horses is driven by Brahma. The triple cities are depicted as three circles inset in the upper register in front of Siva's chariot, each of the lower two circles contains a pair of warrior Asuras, two with drawn swords and two with shields prominently held, indicating perhaps offence and defence. The third upper circle is interesting in that it depicts the aftermath of the conflict—a pair of women—*satis*, who had lost their spouses in the battle, standing on either side of a tall flaming pyre with one hand raised with palm facing front, symbolic of their intended immolation as *satis*. Such depiction of *satis* are only too common in sculpture in contemporary and earlier times in the south, particularly as a component in the sculptures on the hero-stones or *Virakals* or in *sati*-stones or *masati-kals*.

The series to the east of this quadruple grouping round the centre-piece lotus is of three equal square panels in a row with a narrow long strip at the bottom, extending from end to end with vignettes related to the theme in the three square panels. These narrate the Mahabharata episode of Draupadi-*parinaya*, another *vaivahika* scene on the east as if in symmetry with the Parvati-*parinaya* on the west already described. The central of the three square panels shows the actual wedding of Draupadi and Arjuna attested by Drupada and his queen and others. The two lateral panels together depict two stages in Arjuna's acceptance of the wager of the *matsya-yantra* set for winning the hand of Draupadi. The one on the south shows Arjuna looking up to take a full preliminary view of the target on the ceiling, the whirling *matsyas*, while in front of him stands Draupadi, all anxious about the result of the

wager in the *svayamvara* and the ability of Arjuna in this test of archery. Behind her stand her attendant maidens, while behind Arjuna, who is thus scrutinising the target, stand king Drupada and his queens. The corresponding panel on the north, depicts the second part of the action, Arjuna looking down into the trough of water which has been drawn so as to come vertically below the target and cast its reflection, into which Arjuna bends down to look before shooting his arrow upwards to the target while all the time seeing it in the reflection below. Behind Arjuna stand Bhima and his other three brothers while in front of him stands Draupadi anxiously looking into the reflection in the water, even as Arjuna does while shooting the actual target on the ceiling by looking at the reflection below. Behind Draupadi, are her parents—the king and his queens. The narrow linear strip below the three panels mostly depicts the scene of the *svayamvara*, the various types of persons assembled—priests standing and sitting and other kings that had come to the *svayamvara* besides nobles and merchants, all in attitudes of discussion, wonderment and gossip. At the extreme south is shown a small vignette of a reclining god with many heads and hands in *visvarupa* with a *gana* like attendant beyond his feet, a devotee couple on the south and three more devotees on the north. The exact significance of this cameo and its relation to the main theme is not clear in the context.

The next linear and continuous strip to the east of this *vaivahika* narration depicts in three narrow oblong panels scenes of battle and the hunt and chase. Three pennoned chariots are more prominently shown



in the south extreme in a row, the two extreme ones drawn by horses and the middle one by bullocks, In the upper register are the foot men or beaters involved in the chase, the quarries shown are a darting deer, and a tiger. This would appear to relate to the legendary account of the choice of the site of Hampi as the capital. The panel in the middle shows a chariot drawn by an elephant on the south and two others, one drawn by horse and the other drawn by elephant coming opposite. In each chariot is seated the principal royal figure behind the driver, with an attendant seated in the rear. In the upper register is shown a phalanx of four foot-men carrying staff-like weapons—lances, perhaps marching opposed by a similarly marching squad of four infantry men. The third panel on the north extreme is mostly a repetition of the central and depicts a pennoned horse-drawn chariot at the south proceeding against two more that come opposite, one drawn by elephant and the other by horse. The upper register again shows the opposing squads of infantry men. These two perhaps refer to the battle between Harihara and Ballala III after which Harihara assumed the chiefship of Anegundi.

The easternmost panel is of much greater historic interest and significance in that it depicts sage Vidyaranya seated in a *pallaki*, being carried in all pomp and ceremony in a procession to the Virupaksha temple, the facade of which with shrine inside is depicted at the northern extreme. The procession fills the long panel for its entire length except for a small indistinct badly weathered panel in the south extreme that seems to show a crowned person (Vidyadhara—if the flying

attitude of his legs is any indication) inside a circular lotus pool with star-like lotus flowers distributed all round him. Vidyaranya in the typical robes of a *sanyasin* is seated in the palanquin, carried by bearers, that occupies the exact centre of the composition. The palanquin has an arched hood, stretched over an arched pole beam the projected ends of which are shouldered by the bearers. Below it march two attendants one bearing a *chaurie* or fly whisk and the other a standard. Vidyaranya, the occupant of the palanquin, has his *uttariya* or upper shawl covering his body, exposing his right arm in full, and passing over the rear half of his head as is typically worn by the heads of the Sringeri Matha even today. There is no mistaking his benign countenance and flashing eyes beaming with grace. Seated in *padmasana*, he half reclines on the pillow set behind him. In front walk two rows of footmen, carrying lances with pennons, preceded by an outrider on an elephant who holds a larger standard. The elephant is about to enter the *naligeha* or entrance passage of the outer *gopura* of the Virupaksha temple, while a piloting camel preceding it is half way through this outer entrance. Its rear half is rendered visible. Guarding the entrance as it were is a soldier in occidental uniform, pantaloons, jacket, helmet, musket and all in vivid contrast to the local soldiery and men in contemporary Indian apparel and accoutrement. Such Portuguese mercenaries had become common in the Vijayanagar court and army. In the upper register over this procession, marching in front of the palanquin is shown a row of men in various attitudes of dance and music, some with musical instruments accompanying the dance. The rearmost in the series are shown with



outstretched hand as if welcoming or herding the sage and showing the way. Behind, the palanquin is followed by a fully caparisoned elephant with *havdah* on, in which are placed the drums or *naggaras*. The elephant is followed by a camel carrying two drums on its back with a drummer sitting astride and playing vigorously on them with sticks. The upper register again shows footmen in the march that form the rear guard. The Virupaksha temple at the north extreme towards which the procession is shown as moving, is faithfully represented in its essentials - the large outer *gopura* portrayed in form and shape much as it is seen today and had come to be at the time of Krishna Deva Raya with the large entrance or *nalige* adorned with festoons for the occasion. Behind it is symbolically shown the main Virupaksha *vimana* with its storeyed super structure and the Virupaksha linga with mask depicting Virupaksha's head in anthropomorphic form with a moustached face and third eye as is to be seen even today and is the wont in the case of lingas of Siva temples outside the Tamil country in Andhra and Karnataka. A further touch of realism to this procession is added by the monkeys, residing on the *gopura* and *vimana*, and the birds roosting in them, leaping off and flying about, scared as it were, by the din and tumult of the procession. Hampi or Pampa is traditionally believed to be Kishkinda of the Ramayana, the home of the monkeys; and the Pampa Sarovara, the haunt of the birds.

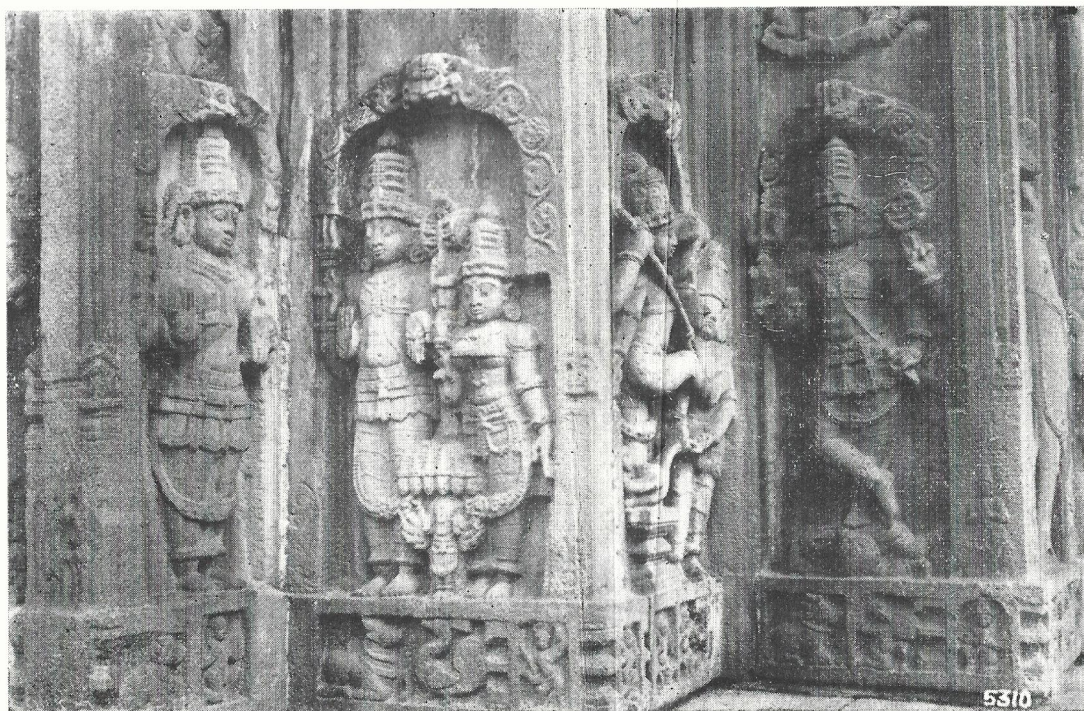
The paintings are executed in true Vijayanagar style of the times of Krishna Deva Raya and recapitulate for the most part the concept, spirit and content of





Vidyasamkara Temple sculptural panels : Bhringi





Vidyasamkara Temple sculptural panels.



A panel of a figure holding a Sapta Sira serpent.



the Vidyasamkara temple of Sringeri. Particularly, we note the depiction of the Trimurti couples at one end—the commencement on the ceiling on the west nearer the sanctum, the peculiarities seen in the Dasavatara depiction with the Jina-Buddha iconic mix up, and the Vishnu-form-arrow of Tripurantaka, all such parallelisms juxtaposed in the same *chitravitana* lay-out, with the ceremonial procession of Sage Vidyaranya at the eastern extreme, nearer the *gopuras*. These are more than mere coincidences and represent a calculated design and purpose. The depiction of the architectural and other motifs, the costume and jewellery, the delineation of the figures, their poses and styles, and other conventions are all typically Vijayanagara and rendered in fresco, or lime-medium, even as they are in Lepakshi and Somapalli, that are almost coeval, and again earlier, in Thanjavur, Sittannavasal and Panamalai, making for an unbroken continuation of fresco tradition and technique.

The western corridor of the complex at the rear of the Virupaksha shrine contains a modest sanctuary for Sage Vidyaranya. The shrine part as extant is a small square unpretentious structure built coarsely of granite. The pilasters on the walls resemble those of the southern temples. The superstructure, however, has been rebuilt in very much later times. The *mandapa* in front is typically Vijayanagara. Flanking the entrance is a portrait in relief of Emperor Krishna Deva Raya and his queen indicating unmistakably its date. The sculpture of Sage Vidyaranya that exists at present consecrated inside the shrine is a modern one in black stone, done in the round. The building of the original shrine to the Sage Vidyaranya is ascribed to King Harihara II



(A.D. 1377-1404) and must have been after the *videhamukti* of Vidyaranya in A.D. 1386. The present idol of the sage is in the usual seated posture, his right hand in the *vyakhyana mudra* held perceptibly a little away from his chest and the left hand holding a *pustaka* or palm-leaf book with inscription on its cover piece reading 'om-Namasivaya' in Telugu script. But the original and older icon, removed because of disfigurement and now kept in the Virupaksha Vidyaranya Matha (presided over by Sri Satchitananda Abhinava Sankara Bharati Svamiluvaru with headquarters at Anantapur), is broken at the right elbow. In this icon the right hand in a pose like *chinmudra* is shown placed close to his heart on the chest thereby indicating the *So-ham* or *Ahambrahmasmi* attitude as opposed to the mere *vyakhyana mudra* of the later substitute and the left hand resting on the leg is shown with palm open and facing up. To the extreme right of the sculpture is also shown the *danda* of the *sanyasin*, which is absent in the later modern icon. The placing of the *danda* by the side incidentally conforms with the practice in the Sringeri matha of the *gurus* not always holding it, except on specified occasions and while making *vandana*, but keeping it near at hand, when in *puja* or meditation or in discourse. The present idol is stated to have been installed some half a century ago, in the shrine, the original structure of which had evidently become dilapidated and was rebuilt in a rough and ready manner, without regard to architectural niceties or anachronisms, using stones of some derelict and disused shrine in the precincts. But the original Vijayanagara front *mandapa* with the royal portrait sculpture of Krishna Deva Raya (A.D. 1509-29), still

extant stands to tell the story of a pre-existing Vijayanagara style shrine that Harihara II had built and to which Krishna Deva Raya added the front *mandapa*. It is learnt also that at the time of the installation of the new Vidyaranya idol by Venkatesvara Sastri, the then Dewan of the Hampi temple, another idol, that of Adi Samkara, was also got made and installed in one of the *mandapas* some two hundred years from the Virupaksha temple. In front of the Sri Vidyaranya idol in the Vidyaranya temple is a *Srichakra Yantra* of the *bhuprastara* type, believed to mark the *samadhi* of the *guru* after his *videhamukti* in A.D. 1386. There is, incidentally, another Sri Chakra in the Virupaksha temple of the *Meru* or rising type with gold encasement. Harihara II shortly after this event is known to have visited Sringeri and founded the *agrahara* of Vidyaranapura in memory of his *guru*. The *virittis* granted on the occasion include one each to the temples of Bharati Ramanatha raised over the *samadhi* of Bharati Krishna Tirtha and Vidyavisvesvara built in memory of Sri Vidyaranya.

In resume, of all these monumental associations on vidyaranya stands foremost the painting of his ceremonial procession in all its glory as the emperor of the realm intended it to be. It teems with all significance and verily reproduces in picture form, to the extent the 'canvas' (ceiling) would permit, the eminence of the Sage, the high esteem in which he was held by the emperor and the visible and material honours he had placed at the *guru's* feet as his submission—honours that were royal or imperial in all the aspects not a bit inferior to those of his own—insignias,



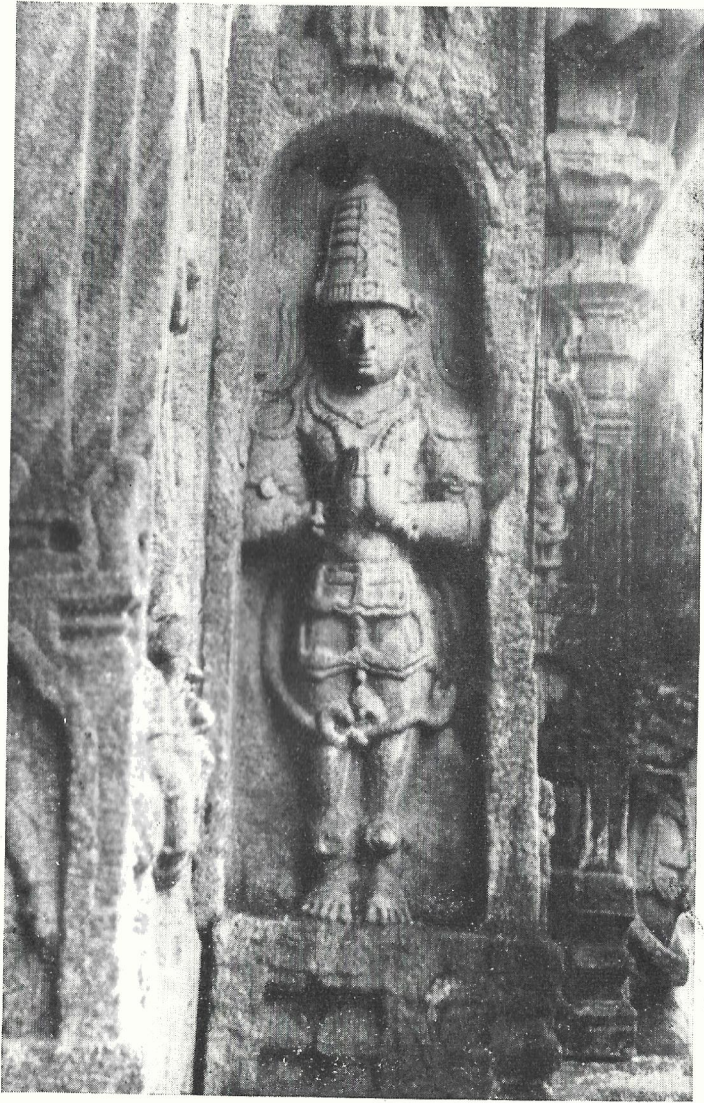
including parasols, conch, disc, fly-whisks drums, bells, trumpets, torches, banners, festoons of silk, palanquins, a golden throne and golden sandals (*paduka*) inlaid with gems. The painting depicts in all its details the entry, first perhaps, of the *Paramahansa parivrajaka Tapaschakravarti*, imperial in the spiritual realm, the lineal 'descendant' of the *Shanmatasthapanacharya*, into the portals of the royal temple, the centre of the capital city, and the secular empire which he helped to found, as the Karnataka *simhasana pratish-tapanacharya*, who signed his epistles as *Sri* or *Sri Narayanasmruti* while the emperors had adopted the royal sign manual '*Sri Virupaksha*', their tutelary deity. The event was doubly sanctified thus; and in the din and tumult of the ceremonial procession entering the Virupaksha temple leading and following Sage Vidyaranya there into, so vividly reproduced, in all minutiae, that the birds and monkeys on the *vimana* and *gopura* even were scared and disturbed from their haunts, one could faintly hear the herald announcing :—

*Sri Paramashansa Parivrajakacharya, Padavakya pramana paravara parina yama niyama-sana pranayama pratyuhara dhyana dharana samadhyashtanga yoganush-tana nishta Tapaschakravarty anadhyavichinna Sri Samkaracharya guru parampara prapta Shad-darsana sthapanacharya, vyakhyana simhasanadhisvara, sakala nigamagama sara hridaya samkhyatraya pratipadaka vaidika marga pravartaka sarvatantra-svatantradi Rajadhani Vidyanaagara Maharajadhani Karnataka-Simhasana Pratishtapanacharya Srimad Rajadhiraja, Guru Bhumandalacharya, Rishyasringa Puravaradhisvara Tungabhadratiravasi Srimad Vidyasamkara pada padmaradhaka Sri Jagadguru Vidyaranya etc.*

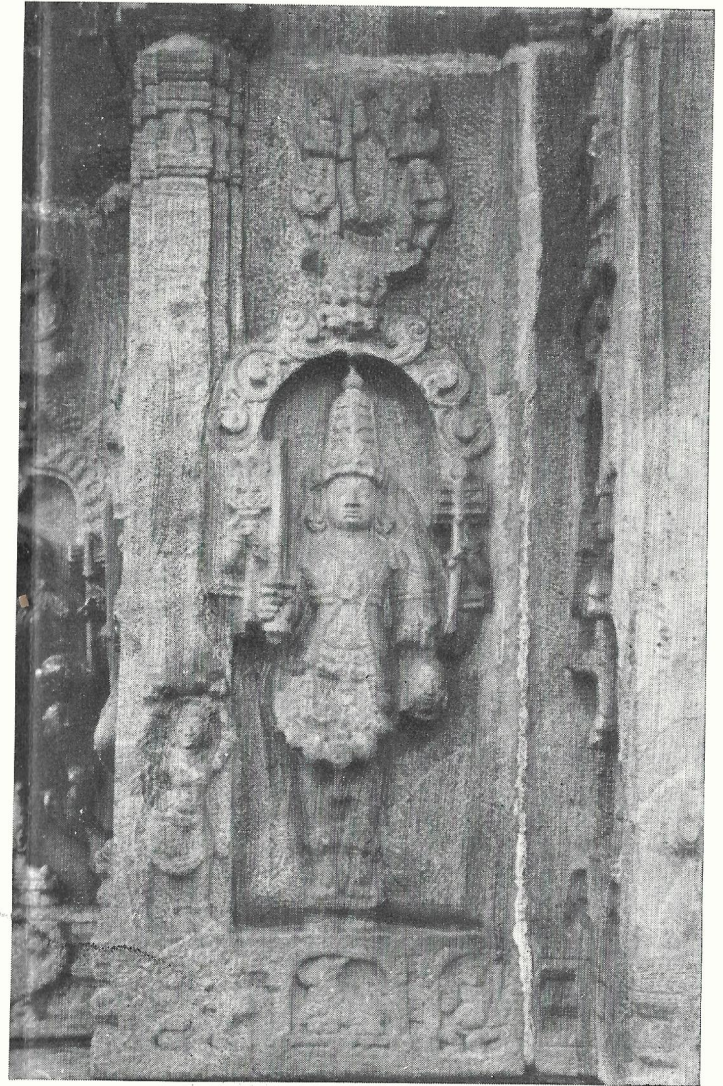
Possibly the painting commemorates a very important event in the capital of the empire, with the emperor inside waiting to receive the exalted personage.

We note also that Vidyaranya's palanquin in the procession is carried in the usual or normal way in the 'end-on' position with the bearers fore and aft and not in the *adda-pallaki* fashion, with the palanquin held in the 'broadside on' position across the street with the bearers close to the sides of the street, a unique royal honour that was granted by later monarchs to the gurus of the Sringeri pontificate. This fact, while indicating the priority in time of the painting to the assumption of this later unique honour, would indicate independently of other evidences the contemporaneity of the painting with the times of Krishna Deva Raya, the builder of the Rangamandapa in which it occurs *evidently reproduced either from an earlier portrait of such a procession in the imperial portrait gallery or chitrasala or from vivid memories of the tradition*. This unique portraiture of Sage Vidyaranya, rendered in the painting in as regal a manner as the grateful and devout monarch and ardent disciple intended it to be, is a memorial more telling than the usual shrines that Harihara built in his guru's name, as others of the line did for the other pontiffs, and will be equalled only by the other unique memorial—the Vidya-Samkara temple of Sringeri, built as an unequalled edifice under the aegis of Bharati-Krishna Tirtha and Vidyaranya by the devout Harihara and Bukka.



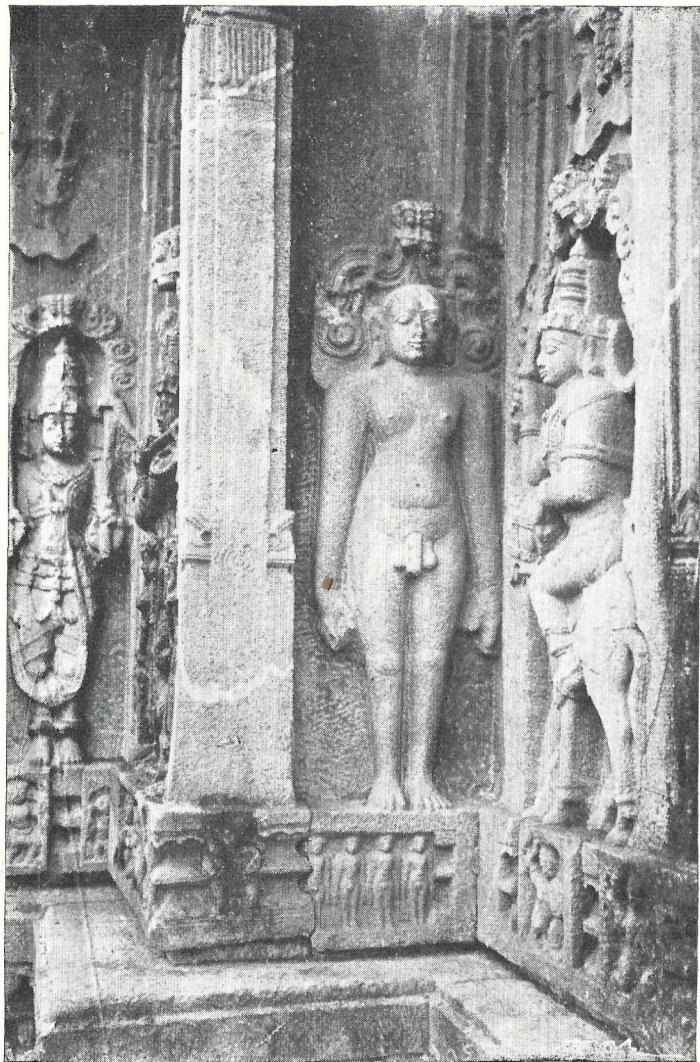


A sculptural panel

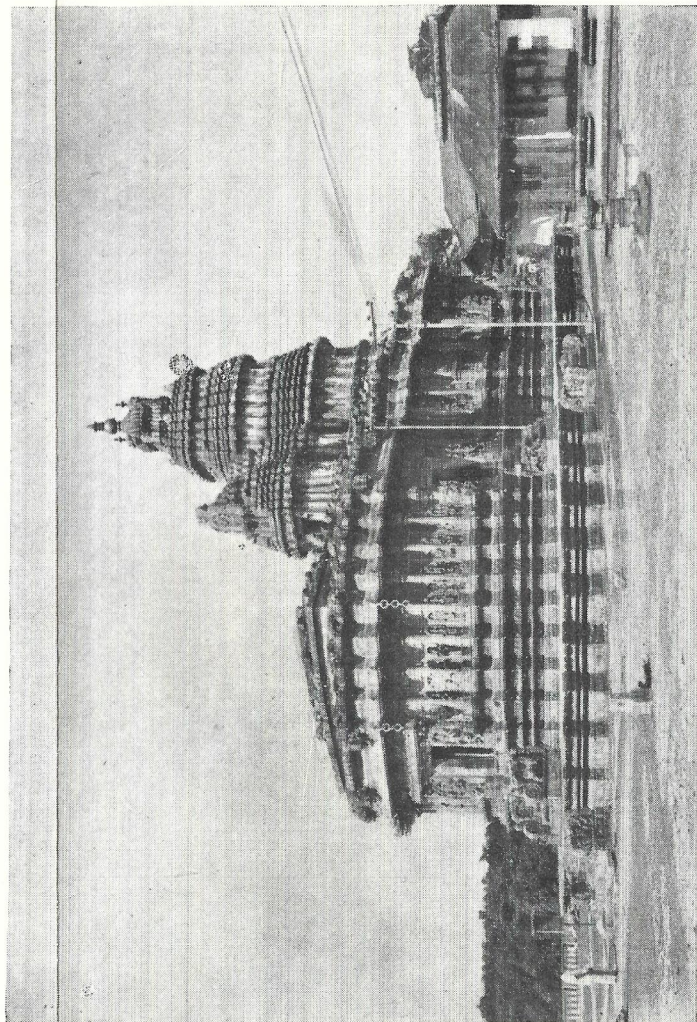


A sculptural panel





A sculptural panel—Jaina sculpture



Vidyasankara Temple—a view from the East.



